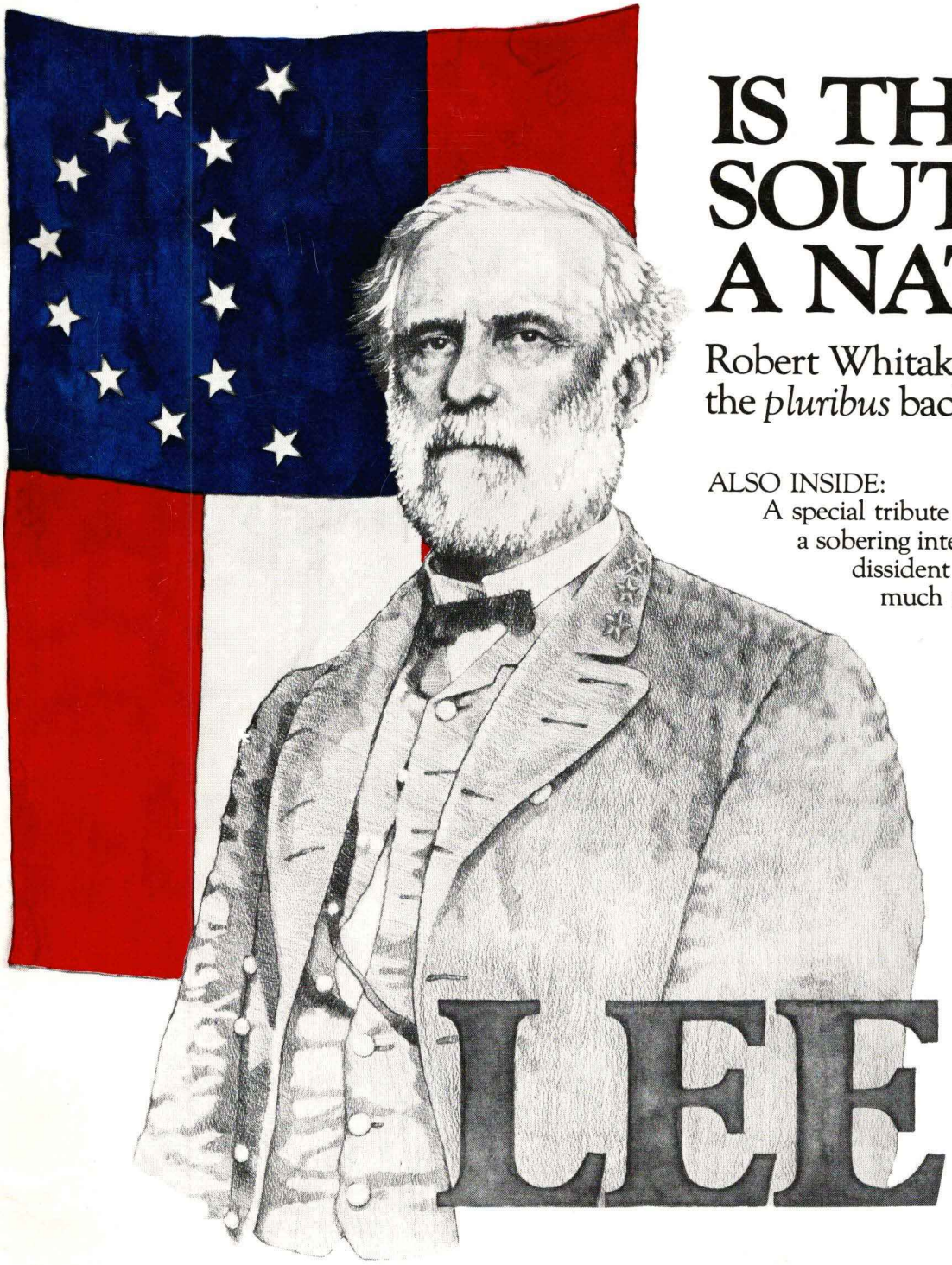
THE SOUTHERN PARTISAN

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 4 FALL 1982



IS THE SOUTH A NATION?

Robert Whitaker wants to put the *pluribus* back in the *unum*.

ALSO INSIDE:
A special tribute to M.E. Bradford, a sobering interview with Russian dissident Makarenko and much much more...

LEE

About the Cover...

The cover portrait of General Robert E. Lee was created by Michael Story, a South Carolina artist whose portraits have appeared on the cover of previous issues of *The Southern Partisan.*

The original work "Lee" has been printed in a guaranteed limited edition of 500 copies (20"x26"). This full size limited edition print is now available to the readers of *The Southern Partisan.*

This special portrait of Lee can be ordered in black and white, as it appears on this advertisement, or hand colored by the artist, similar in appearance to the version on the cover of this issue of *The Southern Partisan.*

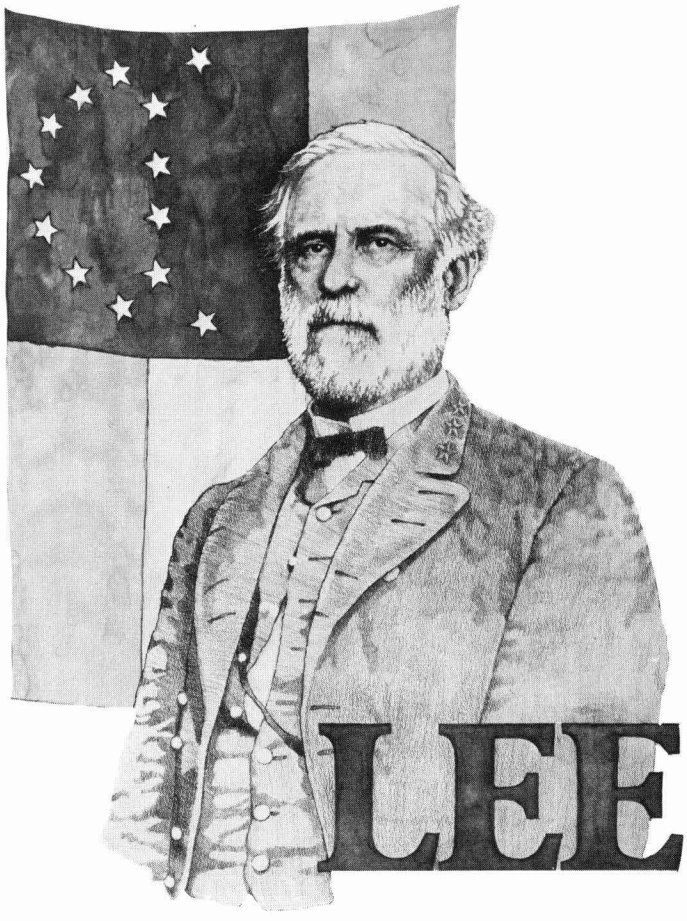
Here are Mr. Story's comments on how he developed this striking portrait of "Lee."

"Having just completed the portrait of Sherman for 'The Burning of Columbia' assignment, I felt it only fitting to try and make a positive statement about the South and Lee in particular. I decided to do a portrait of Lee, but was uncertain as to how I would approach it.

"I started compiling photographs and found one that was particularly interesting. It was taken of General Lee's headquarters' flag. I discovered that Lee would place this flag outside whatever makeshift headquarters he could find, while in battle. I wanted to work the flag into the portrait and found it served well as a background element.

"I studied many photographs of Lee dating from the early war period to the last year of his life. He had aged quickly during that time and I knew I needed to capture him at the right moment in history. Then I came across some photographs taken by Mathew Brady at Appomatox in 1865. I was particularly struck by these. The war was over and the South had surrendered, yet in Lee's face there remained a fierce and determined pride in the South and in himself. That feeling is what I wanted to capture in his portrait."

"Lee" is sold exclusively in Columbia through English Frame and Gallery in Five Points. The black and white prints sell for $25 while those specially hand colored by the artist sell for $40. An additional $3.95 for shipping and handling should be included for any prints mail ordered. An example of both the black and white and hand colored prints are handsomely framed and on display at English Frame and Gallery.



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☐ Black and White Print (signed & numbered) $28.95 enclosed

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THE SOUTHERN PARTISAN

A Publication of the Foundation for American Education

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 4 FALL 1982

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A Publication of the Foundation for American Education

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A PARTISAN VIEW

—Richard M. Quinn

Save Confederate Memorial Hall

A dignified old Victorian mansion stands in the Logan Circle district of Northwest Washington, D.C. Early in this Century, the Hall was used as a home for aging Confederate veterans who had no where else to go.

For the better part of a century, the old building has been known as the Confederate Memorial Hall. The last surviving shrine to the Confederacy in our nation's capital now houses many treasures and relics of the War, including priceless paintings and sculptures.

In recent years, the cost of maintaining the Hall has inflated to the point that the Confederate Memorial Association has been forced to launch an emergency drive to raise the funds necessary to save the Hall from a forced sale. John Edward Hurley, a sturdy Southern patriot, is leading the fight to save the Hall.

If you would like to help, Mr. Hurley can be reached at the Confederate Memorial Association, 1101 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Suite 107, Washington, D.C. 20037.

Confederate Memorial Hall

Complaints Department

We have received more than a couple of letters asking ever so politely "Where-the-heck-is-my-magazine?" There is a singular delay (sometimes) before a new subscriber receives his first issue.

The fault, dear reader, lies not with ourselves but with the United States Post Office whose regulations on bulk rate postage make it necessary for us to get a bushel and a peck of new subscribers before we can benefit from the lower postage cost. Our only alternative (i.e. mailing at non-bulk or prime rate) ends up costing us about a dollar more per reader—a marginal cost that our brave quarterly could not long endure.

For our part, we will continue to do everything we can to make *The Southern Partisan* an experience worth waiting for.

On The Death Of A Printer

Quality Printing is a relatively small printing business in Orangeburg, South Carolina. Pat Majors, the man who owned that business, liked *The Southern Partisan*. He always wanted us to be perfect.

Pat's son died heroically a few years ago in a fire. Ever since then, there was a tired sadness in Pat's eyes. And his smile, still sincere, was never the same.

Pat was killed instantly a few weeks ago on an interstate highway, late at night, driving home after a long day. A confused motorist was driving the wrong way. It wasn't Pat's fault. And neither was anything that's ever been wrong with this magazine. ⊠

The Southern Partisan is published quarterly by the Foundation for American Education, a non-profit educational foundation. Annual subscriptions are $12.00, with a single issue price of $3.00. Correspondence should be addressed to *The Southern Partisan*, P.O. Box 11708, Columbia, South Carolina 29211. Copyright 1981 by the Foundation for American Education/*Southern Partisan*. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part in any language without written permission of *The Southern Partisan* magazine is prohibited.

THE CONCURRENT MAJORITY

—Clyde N. Wilson

Tar Heels' Revenge

An article by a Canadian historian in a recent issue of the *North Carolina Historical Review* lays to rest an old canard—the charge that during the War for Southern Independence North Carolina soldiers were notable for desertion. After an exhaustive study of all available records, Professor Richard Reid concluded that it simply is not so. North Carolina had more deserters for only one reason: because it had more men in the Confederate Army than any other State. But the percentage of deserters compares favorably with other States.

The research turned up by Reid sheds some interesting light on the war and the Confederate effort. Desertion was not always desertion. Confederate records did not make the modern distinction between desertion and AWOL, leading to over-estimation of the former. And being AWOL from the Confederate Army was not usually a product of "Unionism." Just as Southern folk tradition has it, soldiers tended to leave when they were exhausted or in order to care for families in areas ravaged by the enemy, and they often returned to the ranks when they had recuperated or finished their business at home. The "Unionism" of the Western mountain region of North Carolina has also been greatly exaggerated. The troops from that area served as loyally and well as any others. The Tar Heels got a reputation for disloyalty from irresponsible Richmond newspapers, Reid surmises.

It is good to have old falsehoods put to rest. There are no better Southerners anywhere than the common folk of North Carolina. They have remained loyal to the inherited ways while many of their prosperous neighbors have sold out for a mess of pottage. It is Charlie Daniels, from Wilmington, who tours the Midwest with the Battle Flag flying, and Doc Watson, from Asheville, who finishes every concert with "Dixie." It is Andy Griffith from Mount Airy who succeeded in making the most durable favorable impression a Southerner has ever made on the mass media. And what about Richard Weaver? Sam Ervin? Jesse Helms?

The data on Confederate desertions provides an interesting comparison with modern American armies. The Confederate army had a much wider age distribution among the men in the ranks. Every age from 15 to 50 was substantially represented. This people's army is in stark contrast with recent American wars where the combat arms were disproportionately made up of men, many of them Southerners, who were either too young, too naively patriotic, or too lacking in influence to get safer assignments.

There are many honorable exceptions, of course, but it is broadly true that in American wars, the privileged and well-to-do, who ought to lead in war as well as peace, seldom do. In World War II a lot of "smart" conservatives stayed home and made big bucks in war industries and a lot of "smart" liberals had desk jobs in Washington where they wrote propaganda to establish what the war was "about" and drew up plans for the social engineering to be implemented after the war was over. The actual fighting and dying and the men who were doing it was the last thing that ever crossed the consciousness of the average Washington liberal.

The extent to which the fighting forces in World War II were made up of Southerners, referred to contemptuously in those days as "hillbillies," is indicated by the British slang name for the American flying arm: "The Royal Texas Air Force," and by the apochryphal story that Japanese suicide charges used to be prefaced by the shout: "To hell with Roosevelt! To hell with Babe Ruth! To hell with Roy Acuff!" I don't have figures to prove it, but I suspect the story was not a lot different in Vietnam. Southerners didn't do it alone, of course; but they did their share or more and, as usual, got no thanks for it. Needless to say, the war experienced by the "hillbillies" in the field was quite a different war from that experienced in the high-profit, high-wage economy and Hollywood mass consciousness at home.

There has been a tendency in recent years for historians to disparage the Confederate war effort—to emphasize defeatism, lack of will to win, etc. Of course, those elements were present in the War of Southern Independence, as in any human effort. However, any just and sensible view cannot escape the conclusion that by American standards the Confederate effort was the most heroic in our history.

Suppose that during World War II the Germans had taken New York and were advancing on Cincinnati; that the Japanese had taken LA and were moving east; that the enemy controlled all the transportation arteries and was making war on the civil population; that the economy was staggering; that not just healthy young men were being sent into the trenches but the old, the sick, and the wounded as well. How would American morale have held up? But this was exactly the situation of the Confederacy by 1864, yet the fight was kept up. Defeatists? Not according to General Sherman, who was moaning in the late winter of 1865 that the damned Rebels had already been beat, had already lost everything, but wouldn't give up! Surrender came, not when the will to fight had disappeared, but when leaders like General Lee decided there was no longer means to carry on resistance without resort to all-out guerilla warfare. Being the kind of men they were, the Confederates chose what they considered a conditional surrender to a struggle that would have been most damaging to their own people.

The Confederate War was a people's war. Some 12,000 North Carolinians were killed in World War II. If the percentage had been the same as of the white male population who died in the Civil War, there would have been 300,000 deaths (one in four men). Liberals are always rummaging through history looking for "people's movements." Usually what they come up with looks a lot more like a cocktail party conspiracy or an obstinately unsystematic labor revolt than a people's movement. The Southern War of Independence, far and away, was the biggest and most authentic people's movement in American history. ■

OBITER DICTA

North of the Border

We know a kindly, mild-mannered old gentleman who works for an organization that receives "federal aid." The "federal aid" is only a small part of the organization's budget, but the organization, of course, has to be run according to the guidelines of Washington (which really means the guidelines of New York, since Washington has no ideas of its own).

The other day this friend of ours got a look at his federally-mandated personnel file. He saw entered there the information that he was "White Non-Hispanic." It was a flash of revelation to him. "Do you realize," he said, "that as far as the Government is concerned, you and I are Nons? We are not important enough to have our own category. We are only noteworthy as NOT being a member of any privileged minority group."

"Maybe we Nons ought to band together. Maybe we ought to demand that the Government pay some attention to our welfare. Do you realize that if George Washington were alive today he would be a 'White Non-Hispanic' just like us? Maybe we Nons ought to demand that the history textbooks be rewritten to recognize our contributions. Maybe we even ought to demand that the television networks be made to portray our culture favorably."

There's Freedom of Speech, and Then There's Freedom of Speech

California now has a law levying fines against an employer who permits an "ethnic" remark to be made by an employee in his place of business. This is the result of hard lobbying by civil rights groups. Canada and European countries already have laws, which are vigorously enforced, levying fines and jail terms against individuals who make remarks considered disparaging of minority groups. However, European countries have long traditions of authoritarian centralism, of punishing unauthorized behavior of all sorts, whatever regime happens to be in power. Unlike the United States, they do not have a federal and fifty State constitutions guaranteeing freedom of speech.

Like the ERA, the law in question cannot be taken at face value. It is merely an entering wedge of a concerted effort to remake American institutions. It could be expanded in coming years to prevent discussion of such issues as busing, affirmative action, immigration, or aid to Israel. Discussion of any of these issues could be interpreted by someone as prejudicial to some group or other. Such laws could also be used to control the study of history—when certain views of history were determined to be disparaging to some group or other, they could be punished.

To the Supreme Court and the liberal media, the freedom of speech that we are to die for includes the right to child pornography, but not the right to discuss plainly the most important issues of our time.

And More Freedom of Speech

The public schools of New York City have recently rejected three high school biology textbooks because the textbooks consider "creation" as a possible explanation for the origin of the Universe along with "evolutionism." The authorities objected that the textbooks did not portray "creation" as supernatural and "unscientific."

Meanwhile, in Fairfax County, Virginia, one John H. Wallace, who makes his living as head of the local high school's "Human Relations Committee," reports that he is writing a new version of Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* that will be suitable for public school children. As Twain left the work, according to Mr. Wallace as reported by Media General News Service, "It's racist trash about a self-deprecating slave. I'd rather have my sons read *The Happy Hooker*."

Not surprising, considering Mr. Wallace's desire to make a whore out of history and literature. Mr. Wallace described his literary endeavors thus: "I'm going to take Huck Finn, put him over my lap, give him a spanking and try to get him to clean up his language."

Drinking, Driving, and Voting

A recent report by one of those relentless federal study commissions complains of the greater number of traffic fatalities in states with 18-year-old drinking limits compared to those with 21-year-old drinking limits. News didn't say how many million dollars per word this wisdom cost us. Wasn't it the feds who not too many years ago enforced 18-year-old voting nationwide (in a quite unconstitutional manner, incidentially)? Eighteen-year-olds can be trusted to vote, but not to take a drink? They can be trusted to drive the ship of state, but not Dad's new hatchback? Does this tell us something about the qualities the federal government looks for in voters?

Women and Children First

Professor Thomas I. Emerson, professor Emeritus at the Yale Law School, recently wrote a post mortem on the Equal Rights Amendment. He supported the amendment and wants to explain to supporters why they lost and what they will have to do to win next time. Writes Professor Emerson: "...the central factor in ERA's demise is that there is something in the Southern culture that makes men and women of that tradition reluctant to accept the concept of legal equality of the sexes."

Professor Emerson is right. There is "something." It is called chivalry and used to be considered the highest and most distinguishing mark of Western civilization.

Censorship, Professional And Amateur

Colorado Springs, a wealthy suburban community south of Denver, has troubles, like so many American cities nowadays, with parents who think that, just because they pay

taxes, they should have some say-so about how that money is spent in the public (i.e. tax-supported) schools and libraries. Now all good men, er, persons, know that this is a question of censorship, though some parents persist in calling it democracy and parents' rights. So courageous Liberal heroine, Mrs. Kris Shelton, bravely and publicly stood up for the rights of public school librarians to buy obscure and hard to find, but important, authors such as Kurt Vonnegut and Harold Robbins, instead of Milton and Dante. In June, Colorado newspapers and TV news shows (there is quite a news war going on in Denver on both levels) were filled with the reports of cowardly attacks on Mrs. Shelton and her home. A window was smashed and Mrs. Shelton herself was beaten up. Even the news break in the middle of "The Hill Street Blues" had a shot of Mrs. Shelton, her face badly scratched, proclaiming to TV cameras that she would kill the next attacker. Front pages and late night news broadcasts were full of pictures, of Mrs. Shelton and her home, of outraged neighbors patrolling the streets with baseball bats, of non-committal but concerned policemen. After about a month's investigation, the police came back to ask Shelton a few more questions. She finally broke down and confessed that she had invented the attacks because of police inactivity after some harrassing phone calls. She had even scratched up her own face. The exact extent of the inventing seemed to vary in different accounts, but there was a general consensus that the poor woman had suffered enough. No charges were preferred, she had to pay only $900.00, none of it going to the police for their time, and to promise to visit a psychiatrist. There were a few stories, mostly buried deep in the inside pages of the local papers, and the news break in the middle of "The Hill Street Blues" was devoted to Lebanon.

Was the press suppressing, ah, "censoring" a detailed investigation of the unwelcome outcome of the whole affair? It certainly looks that way. Of course, you have to look at it from their point of view. When decent, presumably Christian, conservatives break the law and mug a defenseless woman, that is front page news. When another liberal turns out to be a psychopathic liar, well, we don't report "dog bites man." The reports of the psychiatric counseling intrigue us, also. If the shrinks in Colorado Springs can find a cure for Liberalism, we promise to take back every unkind remark we ever made about Dr. Freud. Why, we might even be willing to stretch our no doubt insufficiently rigid opposition to reckless government spending and see some tax monies spent on setting up half-way houses for those who wanted to take the cure.

Billy, Will You Do A Re-Write On This One?

The California Department of Education decided to study the TV viewing habits of 15,385 sixth graders last year and correlate those habits with standardized achievement tests. One conclusion, according to the Associated Press, was that "Youngsters who watch the stunt-filled 'The Dukes of Hazzard' score higher on achievement tests that those who watch the issue-oriented 'Lou Grant.'" Now, one can quibble about the figures, since 63% of the kids watch "The Dukes" and only 6% look at "Lou Grant." Indeed, research team member Mark Felton thought that the significant factors were watching too much TV and watching too late at night, rather than the specific show watched. "It's still true that watching television can rot your child's mind," he was quoted as opining. Still, and with all our objections to "The Dukes" (see Jack Kirby's article in the *Partisan* for Fall, 1981), it is fun to have at least some evidence, from however dubious a source, that the friendly if rather silly stereotypes of the South now prevalent on TV are not hurting our children's math grades. We don't even mind having some "scientific" data to back up our long-held prejudice that "Lou Grant," well, to use the words of Dr. Felton's professional opinion, "rots your mind."

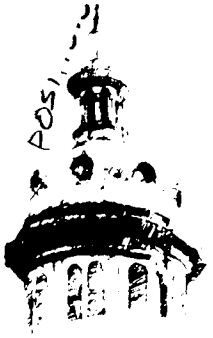
Without Freedom Of Speech I Might Be In The Swamps— Robert Zimmerman (a.k.a. Bob Dylan)

Mrs. Suzanne Clark is the mother of two, once taught at the Graham Bible College in Bristol, Tenn., and now lives in Bristol, Virginia. Although a Southerner, a mother, and a former teacher, Mrs. Clark is under the delusion that she enjoys the same rights of freedom of speech and open expression of opinion that are claimed by Northerners, feminists, and bureaucrats. So when she read in the Bristol (Va.) *Herald Courier* an article by Walter Mika, President of the Virginia Education Association, and Terry Herndon, Executive Director of the National Education Association (the NEA, the group behind the Department of Education), an article that praised the public schools of today and attacked President Reagan, she thought that she had the right, protected by the Jeffersonian First Amendment to the Constitution, to respond to the article.

Mrs. Clark's naivete makes Candide look like Sergeant Bilko.

Mrs. Clark believes that the NEA and public schools in general promote a secular religion, "secular humanism," and undermine the values and traditions of the South, of America, and of the Judaeo-Christian heritage on which our nation's freedom and prosperity, what there is left of it, is built. She wrote in to the *Herald Courier* to say so and the newspaper published her letter. In fact, they did it up as a commentary article.

At this point, the pro-free speech and anti-book burning NEA sued Mrs. Clark for $50,000 in actual damages and $50,000 in punitive damages for the publication of allegedly defamatory statements about the NEA. The NEA is not suing the newspaper, just a private citizen, so by and large the national press, hardy defenders of academic freedom that they are, are ignoring the affair. All honor therefore to a few brave souls who have spoken out, including Nat Hentoff of the leftist "Village Voice" and Allan C. Brownfield of the conservative "Human Events." Mrs. Clark is now suing the NEA and has lodged a third party complaint against Bristol newspapers, Inc. Her defense fund is being raised by Concerned Woman for America, led by Beverly LaPage, P.O. Box 82957, San Diego, CA 92138. Please file this story under the heading of Liberalism's favorite motto: "We shall defend to the death your right...to agree with us."



REPORT FROM THE CAPITOLS

by N. Cider

Reagan And The Pink Tea Set

More than any other single action of the Reagan Administration, the August 17 Communique on U.S.-China relations has alienated conservatives in Congress and the country. President Reagan made virtually explicit promises during the 1980 campaign to preserve our long-standing friendship with the Republic of China as established by the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act (TRA). This Act, passed by Congress after the precipitous and controversial denunciation of the Mutual Defense Treaty with Taiwan and the derecognition of Taiwan by President Carter, specifically requires that the United States continue to sell defensive arms to Taiwan and stipulates that Congress have a definite role in determining how many and what kind of arms the U.S. will sell. The Communique, however, the product of essentially pro-Peking career foreign service officers in the State Department, makes no reference to the TRA or to Congress, speaks cryptically of a "final resolution" of arms sales, and allows a role for the Communist mainland regime to determine our China policy.

Innumerable conservatives in Congress—Senators Goldwater, East, and Symms being the most prominent—have objected to the Communique as a violation of the TRA, and East has held hearings on its legality in his Separation of Powers Subcommittee. A host of Congressmen have also objected, as have Democrats John Glenn and former Senator Richard Stone of Florida. East's hearings featured a panel of widely respected academics who also questioned the legality, not to speak of the wisdom, of the Communique and its embrace of the largest and most brutal totalitarian regime in history.

What troubles conservatives even more, however, is the disregard of campaign commitments and elementary conservative and anti-Communist principles by the President. For Reagan to sign the Communique betrays a woeful ignorance of what he is supposed to believe and do. For the Communique even to have reached the President's desk reveals much the same thing among his advisers and the seemingly perpetual denizens of the State Department that in a happier time were known as "the pink tea set." The lesson, coupled with Reagan's pushing for the humongous tax increase in August and his tepid support of anti-abortion forces in September, is not only that the storekeeper is not minding the store but also that it may not really matter if he does or not.

Now for the good news (sort of). A recently published 500-page report of the Urban Institute, a liberal establishment think tank for urban studies, claims that the effect of the Reagan budget and tax cuts is the "restore economic policy and intergovernmental relations to their status before the New Deal" and that these cuts, coupled with increased defense spending, are leading to a shift in federal funds from the North to the Sunbelt. The Urban Institute doesn't like this, of course, and notes that the Administration's domestic policies are failing to "solve" poverty. Conservatives of a Southern and traditionalist orientation, however, may find the Institute's conclusions a bit more welcome. There is, of course, no reason why one section should receive more federal subsidies than any other section, nor for that matter, why there should be any federal subsidies, but since there are such, and since it is in the nature of government that some get more from it than others, it is better that we get more than they. "Nor is there any reason to believe, on conservative premises, that poverty is going to be "solved" by this or any other Administration, nor indeed that it is even a "problem" to which "solutions" are applicable. If the Urban Institute's findings are accurate, Southern conservatives, nationalists, and loyalists have some reason to exult, for it means that the South at long last, perhaps, has a chance to rise again. ⊠

THE SCALAWAG AWARD . . .

Our "Scalawag" this time goes to Southern turncoat U.S. Senator Dale L. Bumpers (Democrat Arkansas) who earlier this year became the only member of the Senate from the South to vote in favor of federal court-ordered busing. Senator Bumpers recently rose to defend the merits of an American "nuclear freeze" in response to remarks by U.S. Senator Jeremiah Denton (Republican Alabama) suggesting the involvement of Soviet influence in the "movement" to rout the western alliance. Senator Bumpers defended not only the nuclear freeze but the rectitude of his wife who has organized nationwide "peace links" to promote the cause. Even our typical run-of-the-mill moderate scalawag senators from the South have seldom surrendered their integrity on issues involving national security. After all, the South knows well the historic penalty for being on the losing side of a war with an adversary governed by fanatical ideologues.

UNDER WESTERN EYES

Samuel T. Francis

The Cosmopolitan Ethic

Most informed Americans are by now probably aware that the recent nationalization of the Mexican banking system was not an isolated phenomenon. For approximately the last decade major international banks in the developed Western states have extended massive loans to the people's democracies of Eastern Europe, the banana republics of Latin America, and the stewpot autocracies of Africa and Asia. These states—to call them "nations" would be an indulgence in euphemism—are now unable to repay these debts or even to service the interest, leaving their own economies comatose and threatening a global collapse of the banking system and economies of the developed world.

Since many of the lenders include some of the largest banks of the United States, a default, collapse, or refusal to accept disciplines by the creditor states could have disastrous consequences right here in River City. Most banking officials deny this, of course, and claim that they have adequate reserves to survive a collapse or assure us that the government will bail them out anyway. Perhaps so, but what would we expect banking officials to say?

Whatever the consequences of the current crisis, which consists of a total Third World and Eastern bloc debt of about $853 billion, the fact remains that, as columnist Joseph Kraft put it recently, "it is clear that some of the most celebrated figures in international finance made some of the dumbest loans in history." Regardless of what happens or what we or they are going to do about it, an important question is why did these "celebrated figures" make the loans?

Answers to this question range from improbable hypotheses about a Rothschild conspiracy to the fact that in the early 1970s bankers were awash with excess OPEC cash and had to do something with it. The real and most basic answer, however, is that the people who designed and decided upon the loans were animated by what I have elsewhere called "the cosmopolitan ethic"—a view of man and society that holds that all men, everywhere in the world, are not equal but interchangeable and that the intellectual, economic, and technical achievements of one civilization can be transferred to another through a few years of foreign aid, cultural exchange, and business management courses. In the early 1970s, aside from a surfeit of petrodollars, the banking, business, and governing elites of the Western world (even their most conservative members) were possessed of this world view, and they remain so today.

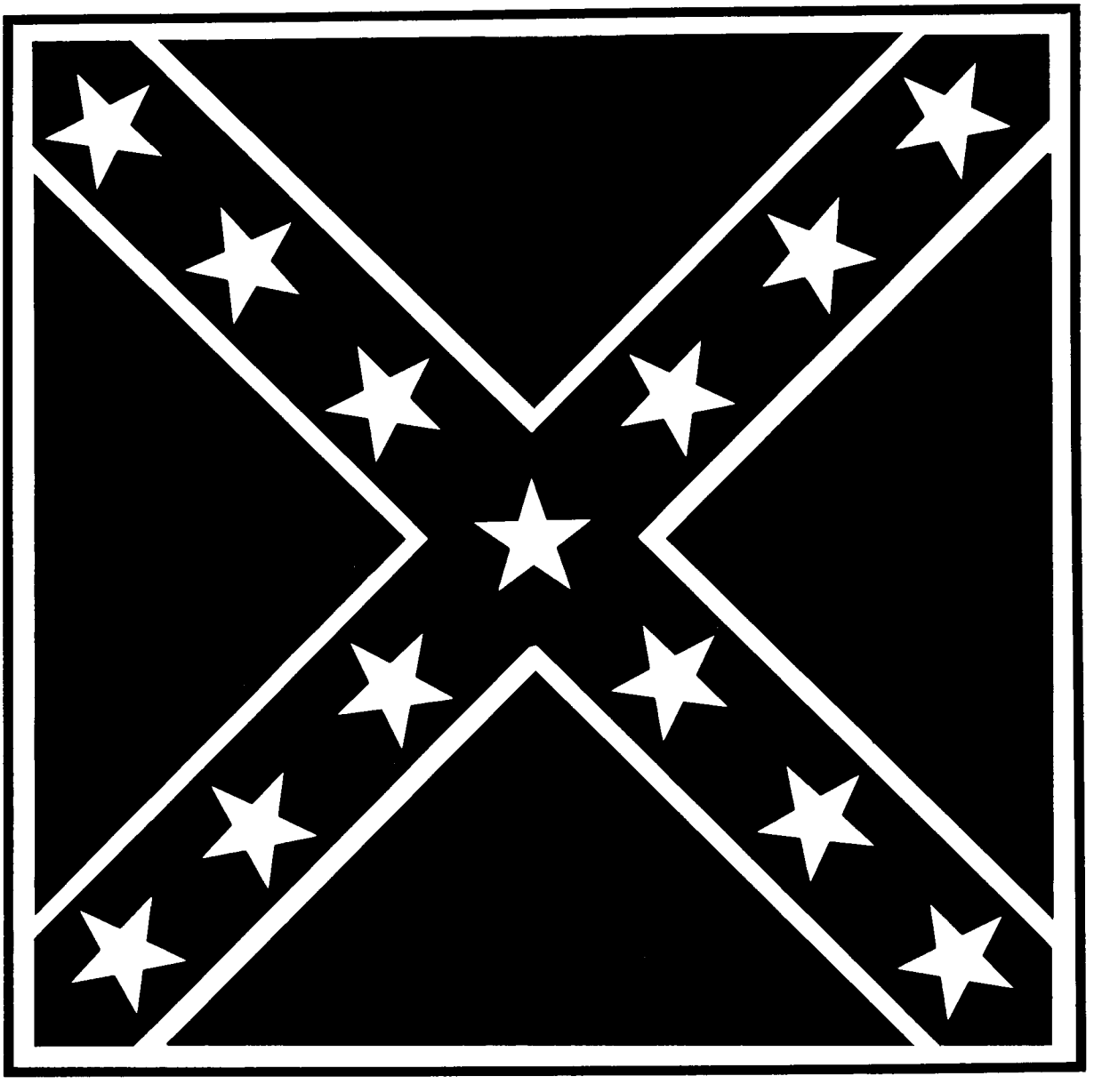
The truth is, of course, that the rest of the world ain't like us. The Third World in particular consists of cultures in which tribal, religious, ethnic, and kinship categories are more important than national, class, or individual identities. Subsistence production systems and conspicuous consumption (and its cousin, corruption) are the foundations of Third World economies. Patterns of deference and hierarchy coupled with perennial vendettas and rebellions are the staples of Third World social relations and political cultures. Perhaps most significantly, the "emerging nation states" of the Third World frequently consist of immense tracts of wilderness, jungle, desert, swamps, or desiccated land interspersed with villagers and nomads, all of which is presided over in stately pomp by a gaggle of thugs surrounded by plenty of hard muscle. If these "leaders" lived in the United States, rare is the businessman who would relish encountering them in a dark alley in Manhattan.

Given the realities of the Third World, then, it was inherently improbable that its economies would develop sufficiently to meet the obligations of their debts; it is even more unlikely that they and their masters will accept the necessary disciplines to be politely suggested by the pundits of the IMF or that they will understand them if they do accept them or that they will know how to profit from them if they do understand them.

Given the realities of the Third World, then, it was inherently improbable that its economies would develop sufficiently to meet the obligations of their debts; it is even more unlikely that they and their masters will accept the necessary disciplines to be politely suggested by the pundits of the IMF or that they will understand them if they do accept them or that they will know how to profit from them if they do understand them. It is not a problem of their "learning" or "changing" or "developing." Their cultural formations are centuries old, and the dynamics of cultural breakdown and transformation are not so powerful as to alter them in a few years of Western managerial regimen.

It is also unlikely that the usually unspoken cosmopolitan assumptions of the Western elite will change. They too are cultural formations, representing habits of mind as deeply ingrained as tribal religious ritual (and as superstitious) is in other climes. The result will be that the West, through its own suicidal ideology, will once again assume the burden of paying for the non-West; the non-West will not be able to carry its burden; and eventually perhaps a catastrophe will occur that will destroy both. ▣

Southern Nationalism



by Robert W. Whitaker

Robert W. Whitaker is the author of A Plague on Both Your Houses *and the editor of* The New Right Papers.

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language informs us that a "nation" is: "1. An aggregation of people organized under a single government. 2. A federation of tribes, esp. one composed of North American Indians." By this definition, there was never an Irish nation until London created it by Act of Parliament in December of 1922. There was never a Polish nation until it was created by the Versailles Treaty in 1919. By this definition, the Czarist "Prison of Nations"—a term equally appropriate for the USSR—was, in fact, the only true nation. The Czar's "aggregation of peoples" was "organized under a single government," and therefore the only true nation was the one ruled from Moscow. According to the *American Heritage Dictionary* the Poles, Ukranians, Finns, Estonians, and all the rest were antinationalist, because they opposed the "aggregation" imposed by the Czar.

Fortunately, other dictionary publishers do not seem to share the American Heritage Publishing Company's apparent conviction that a strong marketing strategy is an acceptable substitute for familiarity with the language being defined. The more conservative *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* defines a nation as, "a stable community of people with a territory, history, and language in common." Inevitably, its second definition is "people united under a single government; country." Therefore, the Czar could indeed have ruled "a prison of nations." But the second definition insists that "the prison of nations" was itself a legitimate nation.

A nation is nothing if not a living continuum of human beings, while the state is only a form of political organization. To define a nation as both is precisely equivalent to declaring a "human being" to be "1. an individual living being of the species *homo sapiens*. 2. a citizen." In other words, Imperial Russia was a nation only if Caligula's horse was a human being after being granted Roman citizenship.

What Nationalism Is Not

The state cannot create a nation, any more than it can create any other form of life. It can, however, mold or even destroy the life of an individual or of a nation. To save his character or his life, the individual emigrates. For the nation which fears for its character or its existence—for a living culture, almost synonymous terms—separatism is the exact equivalent of personal emigration. To the state which threatens life, there can be no question of loyalty.

Those who espouse "the melting pot" as the purpose of the United States have made it their announced intention to destroy every vestige of cultural and ethnic diversity in this country, which, of course, includes the Southern nation as a primary target. I will gladly soften or retract this statement if anyone can give me any other plausible explanation of the term "melting pot." In deciding whether the Southern nation must pursue a course of political separation, a key concern is whether the United States of America is inevitably an instrument of the melting pot.

The United States of America was founded by men who recognized that a "state" was not—just as it is not today—merely a component of a larger organization. By its very name, it rejects the melting pot label. Those who conclude that "E Pluribus Unum" means that the "unum" requires the end of pluralism reveal an ignorance of the Latin language even more profound than my own. If the Southern nation must pursue separatism in order to survive, it can only be because those who have gained control of the political organization of which the South is a part cannot be dissuaded from using that political organization in direct violation of the guarantees embodied in its very name.

Nationalism is not a creature of the state. It is therefore not the product either of political separatism or of political union. A second point is that, while it is particular, nationalism is also not merely the product of particularisms. The Southern nation, the Scottish nation, the Polish nation, and other living nations are integral parts of the totality, and the totality is Western Civilization. An enemy of the whole is an enemy of its parts. We are familiar with those who have sought to use political units to dissolve nations. The histories of Ireland and Poland chronicle the battles of those nations to survive concentrated attempts by successive governments to distort their national character. Today, however, nationalist movements are being used by those who seek to destroy the cultural whole. The presence of Marxists inside European separatist movements is a clear indication that those movements do not understand the nation as a whole. To this extent, they are both particularist and separatist, but they are not nationalist.

Nationalism vs. Classism

True nationalism has consistently opposed Leninism, Marxism, and Legitimacy. For the nations, these are merely alternative prisons. In the nineteenth century, nationalism and class-based revolutionary agitation were generally allied movements. In the twentieth century, nationalism is viewed as the enemy of class-based revolution. To the historian who cannot distinguish between a state and a nation, it appears that nationalism has been the tool of each side. In fact, Metternich and Lenin were enemies of diversity, so diversity has fought each in its time of ascendency. Metternich and Karl Marx saw the world from opposite poles of a continuum, but the continuum was the same: classism. Since Metternich's world was divided between nobles and peasants, the Treaty of Vienna divided Europe from 1814 to 1918 on the basis of "Legitimacy." Political units were apportioned according to the "legitimate" rights of their rulers. Whether the population parcelled out was Magyar or Celtic made no difference whatsoever. In the ensuing certury, therefore, the European nationalist struggled against the artificial—and non-Western—concept of an Erastian nation. In these terms, Marxism was merely a Tweedle Dum reaction to the Legitimist Tweedle Dee. It made no difference that it was now in the name of peasant

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rather than noble that the world was to be parcelled. It is significant that the Southern nation has consistently maintained its rejection of both forms of classism.

Southern Nationalism

Southern nationalism is incomprehensible to the academic bureaucrat, and intractable to the anti-Western ideologue. In the late nineteenth century, rule by the Southern Bourbons came to—historically speaking—an abrupt end as they attempted to use Southern nationalism as a vehicle for classism. By contrast, Henry Cabot-Lodge's 1952 defeat by John Kennedy in Massachusetts ushered in an instant replacement of one ruling family by another. The Southern writer who fancies himself an elitist finds his home in New York, not in Mississippi.

But the same "rednecks" who toss out their self-styled "betters" are equally impervious to the appeals of Tweedle Dum. The moment a political "friend of the working man" becomes a "champion of the International working class," his political bridges collapse behind him, and he must find an appointment to the board of the TVA from a national office-holder who built his political career on the support of the more tractable Northern masses.

Southern wisdom has shown an astonishing ability to remain true to both the Southern and Western culture, while rejecting those who seek to use those loyalties for their own purposes. Anti-clericalism is an integral part of the South, and the South is deeply religious. The idea that there is a natural aristocracy of men is obvious to our people, for as long as they remain our people, and they recognize no man's right to rule. However contradictory these attitudes appear to the academic bureaucracy, they represent an appallingly consistent whole in the eyes of the anti-Western ideologue, be he Marxist, capitalist, or some species of Legitimist. To those who seek to destroy—or, to use a synonym, to "reconstitute"—Western Civilization, the Southern nation is an enemy, because an integral part of that nation is an understanding of what it is trying to preserve. In a world defined by the academic bureaucrats and guided by competing ideologues, the Southern nation can only be regarded either as a rock that must be blasted or a jewel beyond price.

Regional sympathies are not in themselves divisive, because of the nature of the political system we live under. The United States was never intended to be a substitute for the cultural identity of its parts.

Our search for an ideological homeland is therefore sincere, erratic, and hopeless. As individuals, we join and we rationalize. Conservatives offer us principles based upon religion and politics, as well as economics based upon freedom. But when the religion becomes theocratic, the freedom doctrinaire and rootless, and the eonomics classist, we are once again disillusioned. Liberals offer us a sense of social justice. But we have come to realize it as a justice not based on wisdom. Without wisdom, the community degenerates into a community of all mankind, which will exist only when all mankind is brought to admire the liberals' books. The inevitable result has been that we have been able to serve every ideological outlook but our own, and every regional interest except that of the South.

Nationalism and Ideology

In fact, both liberalism and conservatism are far more particularist, far more divisive, than is true nationalism. The true prison of nations is ideology. Several thousand competing ideologies, each of them claiming to be universal, begin by demanding that their adherents ignore the obvious fact that they have loyalties, prejudices, wisdom, and tastes which spring from the cultural background in which they are reared. The thoroughly Western pursuit of objective knowledge about the physical universe has been warped into the endless number of "universalist" ideologies, each calling for a world organized in a laboratory vacuum, free from the divisive dust of human prejudice. A vacuum may be an excellent place for testing partial observations, but when an experimental ideology begins to divide all aspects of life into "preferences"—which agree with the ideology—and forbidden "prejudices"—which do not—it has indeed evacuated the atmosphere in which intellectual life, both individual and cultural, can breathe.

Unlike ideological provincialism, nationalism asks for no vacuum. A true nationalist is not required to renounce political principle or even ideology. He may seek to guide his nation along the lines of his ideology, but he is willing to accept its decision as to its direction. It is the ideological state, not the nationalist state, which has stamped out all political dissent.

Strategy and Tactics

The United States Senate is composed of Republicans, Democrats, and one Southerner, Senator Harry F. Byrd, Jr.

Byrd always sits with the Majority. He (as opposed to the Republicans) has his full share of Chairmanships, and a full measure of influence in making policy. In like manner, the twenty-two senators from the Old Confederacy would, if they thought of themselves as Southerners first, always be part of the Majority. But the Southern nation does not send Southerners to Washington. It sends Republicans and Democrats, conservatives and liberals, but no Southerners.

This categorical statement is not entirely fair. Outside the office, inside their minds, they are Southerners. In Congress, they represent their districts or states, which are located in the South. It is no part of a politician's duty to represent an entity which, however real its existence, insists on remaining politically anonymous.

Without the South, Washington would be fully provided with liberals, and conservatives. To those who believe that the left-right continuum is sufficient for national policy, the Nation South would seem to have no role to play. But for those of us who think our nation offers a

necessary and complimentary perspective, one which transcends ideology, the political anonymity of the Southern nation represents a tragic loss to the Union and to Western Civilization.

As we enter the eighties, almost any proposal makes more sense than the assertion that we are going to end this century without some sort of major political upheaval.

We have a national wisdom which could confound the destructive ideologues and protect ourselves and the civilization of which we are a part. We are the largest natural nation on earth. If the Southern Congressmen and Senators voted each two years to assure themselves a place in the Congressional Majority, there would be no question of taxing the oil and gas resources of (Southern) producer states, to be distributed to taxpayers from the rest of the country. Such a tax, if collected, would at least go back to the states whose income is being taken away. There would be no bill to make the movement of industry from North to South impossibly difficult, a bill such as Congress is right now considering. But these are merely the visible, measurable costs we are paying, the tip which shows our regional helplessness at every level.

Southern electors could meet after the November election, and throw their votes as a bloc to whichever candidate won the election in the South. One may argue that other regions could do the same thing, both congressionally and presidentially. Practically, it would be far more difficult for other regions, for the simple reason that other regions are not nations, and a liberal Democratic Southerner finds it far easier to talk to a conservative Republican Southerner, especially about the interests of his nation, than do politicians from other regions, which are made up largely of people who happen to live close together.

If other areas do indeed work together, it will direct their minds toward the interests of their sections. If you agree with me that what is called "the national interest" too often ends up being in practical terms in the interests of the power and attitudes of Washington provincialism, this intensified regionalism would in itself be a development more than worth the effort. Regional selfishness today would be a needed counterforce to the growing power of both the military-industrial and the education-welfare establishments centered in Washington. A symbiosis based upon regional interests would be far healthier than the symbiosis of power groups which rules the country today.

If the South could force other regions and groups not based on regions to think of their own loyalties, it could act as a powerful antidote to the rootlessness of American society. Regional sympathies are not in themselves divisive, because of the nature of the political system we live under. The United States was never intended to be a substitute for the cultural identity of its parts. To ask "Americanism" to replace cultural and regional indentity is to ask the Constitution to do what it was manifestly not intended to do. The Constitution is a brilliant contract, written by practical, diverse men, under rules by which their diversity could be —if the militants will excuse the term—dovetailed. Such a contract has no place in a state unit based on a monomaniacal "Americanism." For the superpatriot, in short, we have the wrong Constitution.

The question of "separatism" or enhanced regional power can be discussed seriously only if we find it possible for the South to show some signs of being willing to support its own values and identity. If the South flexed its collective muscle, it would take its natural place as the leader of the Western nationalist movements. We would demonstrate that the way to salvation from the melting pot is not Marxism, terrorism, or even separatism, but nationhood expressed in wise and practical politics. The most obvious way to defuse a separatist movement is to allow people to direct their own affairs, within their own communities.

As to the practicality of such a proposal, it depends upon whether Southern nationhood is real enough to carry into politics. As we enter the eighties, almost any proposal makes more sense than the assertion that we are going to end this century without some sort of major political upheaval. Radicalism is in the air, even in the stodgiest air of pragmatic politics. Extremism always flourishes in such periods of despair. It is a time of storm, when "radicalism" —the desires of desperate men—needs to be anchored to bedrock. My suggestion is that the bedrock be the Nation South. ▣

They Had To Give Up On Changing The Spelling

The media moguls met in New Yerk
To discredit the South, their routine work.
They found a State named for Kings of France.
Such Southern effrontery! They were askance.

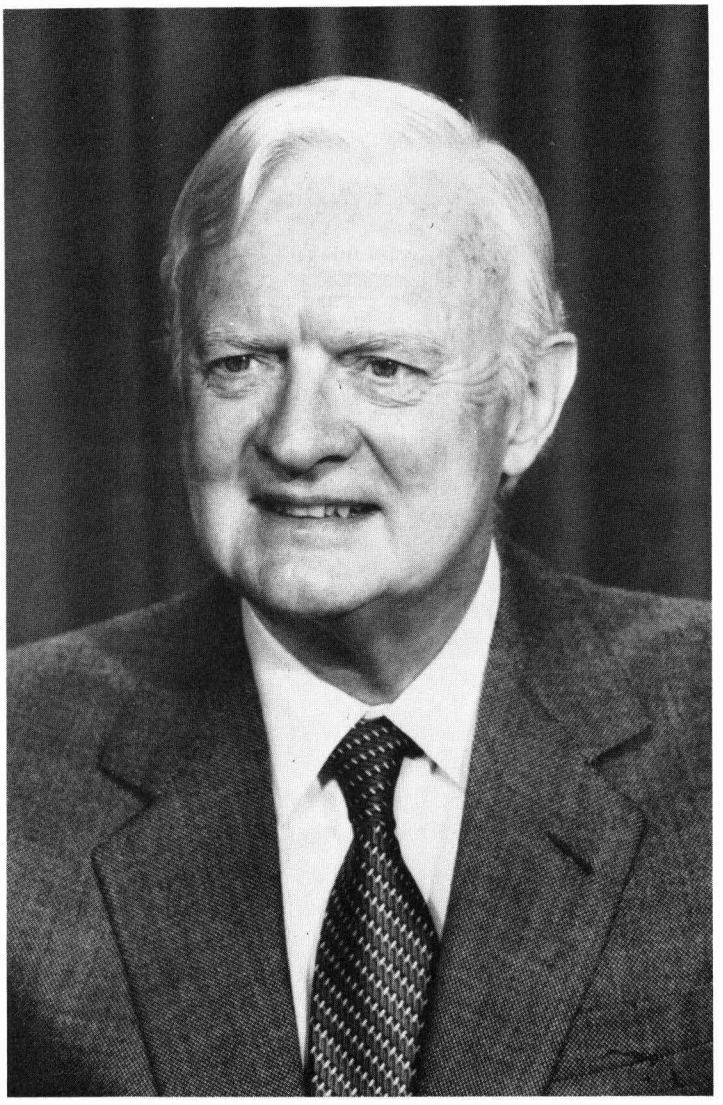
So the word went out from the reign in New Yerk
Like the law as given by the village Kirk
To "Southern" announcers, Texas to Savannah,
Pronounce the State Louise-E-Anna.

A.M.L.

Byrd of Virginia:

A CLOSE LOOK

by Donald Baldwin



Senator Harry Flood Byrd, Jr., will step down January, 1983, when the new Members of the Senate are sworn in, after eighteen years in the United States Senate and seventeen years as a member of the state senate of Virginia, combining thirty-five years service as an elected public servant.

What is so unique about this southern gentleman "of the old school," is that he has maintained consistently the philosophy of government supported by his father, Harry Byrd, Sr., and perhaps first expressed by Thomas Jefferson when he said: "That government which governs least governs best."

The Byrds' service to the Commonwealth of Virginia began over 300 years ago in 1671 when the first Byrd, William Byrd, I, landed with the early settlers at Jamestown. For most of the years since the first Byrd came to America in 1671 there has been a Byrd active in the affairs of the state and the nation. William III helped found the city of Richmond, and many of the subsequent Byrds were active in the development of the state's government, contributing continually to the growth of the state up through the present century. Harry Byrd's grandfather was speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates, and a prominent Virignia lawyer. His uncle, Richard Evelyn Byrd, was the famous Artic explorer. Harry Byrd, Sr., developed what was at one time called the "largest independent apple orchard in the world" while at the same time founding a publishing business in the valley of Virginia and the neighboring West Virginia counties. Harry Byrd, Sr., served as a state senator, Governor, and United States Senator.

Harry, Jr. established his own record after being elected in a special election for the unfinished term of his father, and went on to be elected to three full terms in the Senate of the United States. In each race his margin of victory increased.

In an era of dramatic changes in lifestyles, philosophy, and morals, Harry Byrd, Jr. gives the impression of what many admiring Senate colleagues still refer to as "the proper southern gentleman."

So it goes. The end of an era. The end of a family service in the United States Senate, fifty years, father and son. A unique record of service.

Following is transcript of a recent conversation given exclusively to The Partisan *by Senator Byrd.*

Donald Baldwin works as a consultant in Washington. His firm, Donald Baldwin Associates, specializes in government relations.

PARTISAN: *Do you have any regrets about having served as an independent in the United States Senate, and do you recommend serving as an independent for other Southern politicians?*

BYRD: I have no regrets. I feel comfortable as an Independent. As to recommending it to others, I guess the only thing I can say is it is a somewhat difficult way to be elected; and, as evidence of it, in the long history of the U.S. Senate, only two of us have ever been elected as an Independent. The first, was George W. Norris of Nebraska. He was in the Senate for three terms, two terms as a Republican. In 1936 he felt that the Republicans were too conservative and he wanted FDR that year for President. So, Senator Norris ran as an Independent and was elected in 1936.

PARTISAN: *How would you compare present-day members of the Senate with those of your father's and your career in the United States Senate?*

BYRD: That's awfully difficult to do. I'm looking back over a period of 50 years. First, when my father came over 50 years ago, I was of course quite young at the time and the men of that era impressed me as being very outstanding individuals. One becomes more closely associated with one's colleagues. One doesn't have the same viewpoint necessarily when looking at it from afar. So, I find it very difficult to judge. I must say I'm very well impressed with the younger members of the Senate who were elected two years ago and four years ago. I think that we have a very, very good group.

PARTISAN: *Personally I'm not convinced that many of the elected officials today will stand on the same kind of principles that you and your father have during the 50 combined years that the two of you have served the Commonwealth of Virginia.*

BYRD: My father's hallmark, and I try to follow it, was that he was very reluctant to make commitments, but once he made a commitment he always adhered to it. I've tried to follow that same philosophy. I think it's important for those of us in public life to have a consistent philosophy. That doesn't mean that one cannot change one's views from time to time as a result of a different era. But, I do think it's important that citizens, whether they be lobbyists or whether they be individual citizens, that they have some assurance that we will vote our own philosophy. Now, all senators don't take that same view and I have no criticism of them for doing that. I think it's important that individual citizens have some assurance that there is consistency in viewpoint in their elected representative.

PARTISAN: *Those of us from Virginia were pleased that your father was the "watchdog of the Treasury." Do you think it's too late to stop or turn back what I feel is a definite socialistic trend in recent years?*

BYRD: No, I do not. I think it is going to be difficult to do but I do not think it is too late. President Reagan has made a determined start in that direction and I think that the last year has been very beneficial. It was only because of the determination of President Reagan that the Congress was willing to slow down the rate of increase in Government spending. I don't think it has been slowed down enough. But, at least the trend is in the right direction. In regard to other policies of government, government regulations, government controls, there again President Reagan has taken the leadership in attempting to reverse that—and I think progress has been made in that regard.

PARTISAN: *Do you think that the President should give up on his position of maintaining the tax cuts for the next two years—the individual, and corporate tax cuts that are on the books now? Do you think he ought to back a Democratic proposal to cut those back?*

BYRD: I think the emphasis should be on spending. Many persons feel that spending has been reduced. Well, actually spending has *not* been reduced. As you know, it is the rate of increase in the cost of government that has been slowed down but the amount of money being spent this year will be greater than last year. And, the upcoming year will be greater than this year. So, spending has not been reduced. If we are going to get spending under control, if we are going to balance the budget we must hold the increase in the cost of government to 4 or 5% for at least 3 or 4 years. You mentioned specifically the Reagan tax program. Of course part of it went into effect last October —a 5% reduction on personal income taxes—another 10% to take effect this year. I don't think that ought to be disturbed. On the second 10% which is due to take effect July 1, 1983, I have an open mind. I prefer that it continue as was planned, *but* it might be necessary to make a change in that proposed reduction in 1983. I would not rule that out. My great fear is these tremendous deficits—and I just think it is vitally important—to have those deficits substantially, not cosmetically, but substantially reduced. It may be necessary in order to do that, not only to curtail spending but also to delay or to defer temporarily those tax reductions.

PARTISAN: *Do you mean we should hold the government budget to no more than 4-5% increase in expenditures a year?*

BYRD: We need to hold the increase in expenditures to no more than 4-5% a year. It would still provide for an increase but a substantially reduced increase. Members of the Boilermakers Union came to see me not long ago and they insisted that Government spending had been reduced and had been very harmful to everybody. Well, the first thing people need to do is get their facts straight. Government spending has *not* been reduced. The spending this year will be 10% greater than last year. For the upcoming year, it will be substantially greater than this year. So, spending has not been reduced. What has been reduced has been the rate of increase in spending.

PARTISAN: *Who are the 5 greatest men you have met during your political life?*

BYRD: Well the one who had the greatest influence on me was my

father. He was not only my father but was my closest and dearest friend and also we share the same philosophy—the same concept of Government—so I would put him at the top. I'm a bit prejudiced in that regard. I would put my father's longtime colleague, Senator Carter Glass of Virginia as one of the ablest and most outstanding public officials I have met. I'd put President Eisenhower very high on that list. Several other senators who come to mind I feel were outstanding. I think Senator Taft of Ohio was one of the Senate's all time greats. Winston Churchill I regard as the greatest man of the 20th century.

PARTISAN: *You thought a lot of Senator Richard Russell, of Georgia, I also remember.*

BYRD: Senator Richard B. Russell was my closest friend in the Senate when I first came here. I looked to him for guidance and advice. He had served 30 years with my father. I had known him through most of those years. We became very close after I came to the Senate. I put him right near the top. I am confining my comments on Senators to those who are deceased.

PARTISAN: *I recall also that during your career in the United States Senate you never endorsed anybody for President prior to this past campaign. You did endorse Ronald Reagan for President. Do you feel that he's doing a good job given the problems he has with a divided Congress and taking on this revolutionary effort to turn the country around?*

BYRD: Yes, I think he is doing a good job. I did support him for President. I'm glad I did. I think he's one of the few presidents, maybe the only president in recent years who made a determined effort, and a sustained effort, to get government spending under control.

PARTISAN: *Did your father have as much influence on you as many have thought and some have observed, Senator Byrd?*

BYRD: Yes, yes he did. We were very close throughout his entire life. He was elected Governor when I was a little boy of about 10 years old. He would take me on almost every occasion that he would attend. As a result, by the time I was 14 years old I had been in every county and city in the State. Because of my close contact with him and because I shared his own philosophy I assume I gained basically from him. He did have a great influence on my own views. We didn't agree on everything, of course, but on basic philosophy we did agree.

PARTISAN: *Since 1671 when William Byrd I came to this country there has been a Byrd active in the affairs of the State of Virginia and in the affairs of the country. Your retirement at the conclusion of this term in the United States Senate will at least temporarily end the Byrd "reign," so to speak. Do you have any misgivings about the fact that there isn't anyone, at least at the present, to step in and carry on the Byrd name?*

BYRD: After 50 years maybe it is as well that some other name come into the picture, temporarily, at least.

PARTISAN: *The new occupant for the seat that you hold in the Senate is going to be decided in November. Will you take any position in that campaign?*

BYRD: I don't know. I haven't made a decision on that. I'm certainly not going to make any statement for the time being. I don't know what I may do the latter part of the campaign.

PARTISAN: *Do you have any advice for Southerners coming into public life now? I'm speaking of candidates for State legislature or for the House of Representatives, or United States Senate or Governor?*

BYRD: I'm not much on giving advice. I would encourage sound-thinking individuals to take an interest in government and politics. After all, politics is the art and science and government and we need good people in political life. It's a tough life in many respects. But we need good people in political life and I would hope that more and more individuals would find it desirable to participate.

PARTISAN: *We've talked about the need to cut the spending of the federal government and the need to balance the budget. You commented also that you didn't think it was too late to turn back the socialistic philosophy that many of us feel is influencing our government. Do you think Southerners can continue to play a prominent role as they have through the history of this country? Southerners have been strong in states rights and for more conservative handling of our fiscal responsibility. Do you think Southerners can still play a role in that?*

BYRD: I do. Absolutely. I think Southerners can play a tremendous role. In fact the South and the Southwest, because of the heavy population increases, will have even greater influence on government than it has had in the past. I think the southern philosophy, the southern way of doing things in government, is becoming more prevalent these days and more popular nationwide.

PARTISAN: *Many of us believe that our country's future hinges on being militarily strong as well as fiscally strong. How would you, as a member of the Armed Services Committee, suggest that we rectify this impasse on spending?*

BYRD: Well, I think it's extremely important that we remain militarily strong. Hand-in-hand with that is being strong economically as well. I don't see how, in the long run, we can have adequate military strength unless we have good economic strength. I do believe that the proposed increase in defense spending can be curbed to a degree without in any way jeopardizing national security.

PARTISAN: *How much can be cut?*

BYRD: That's a little difficult at this point to give a precise figure. But, if I had to do it, I would say we could reduce spending for the year 1983 by something like 10 billion dollars without jeopardizing national defense. ■

T.S. Eliot: The Reluctant Humanist

by T. John Jamieson

T. John Jamieson, a student of English literature and of legitimist movements, has published articles in American Spectator, University Bookman, Monarchy Canada, *and other journals.*

Modern conservatives venerate T.S. Eliot as a symbol of traditionalism; but T.S. Eliot the traditionalist was not self-begotten. All students of Eliot's work have paid lip-service to the formative influence of Irving Babbitt, his professor, and of Paul Elmer More, his friend; few of these students would subject themselves to the influence of Babbitt and More by actually reading *Rousseau and Romaticism* and the *Shelburne Essays*. (The exception is Russell Kirk.) Yet, while it would be a simple matter to compare the cultural conservatism of Eliot with that of these self-called Humanists (in allusion rather to Erasmus than to Dewey), it would be just as easy to analyze all of Eliot's major poetry, *The Waste Land* and *The Four Quartets* in particular, as a manifestation of the Humanist philosophy. For Eliot's poetry may be seen as a long meditation on the Flux of Heraclitus, on the impermanence and relativism of the sublunary world by a soul seeking, in philosophy and religion, the security of a world of permanent and absolute value. Such was Humanism's quest of the spirit—the dualism of Babbitt and the Platonism of More. While the Humanists ring the changes upon "the flux" and "the philosophers of the flux," the weary voice of Eliot asks, "Where is there an end to the drifting wreckage?"

Though they are at present out of fashion, time will reveal More and Babbitt as twentieth-century America's two greatest critics. Though Eliot later testified to his deep respect for them, his early, very strident criticism of them (in *The Sacred Wood* and in his two essays, "The Humanism of Irving Babbitt" and "Second Thoughts About Humanism") did far more to bury than to praise them. To one in touch with the profundity of More and Babbitt, Eliot's ambivalence is troubling. Could Eliot have been insensitive to the virulence of his own language? This ambivalence may have been the result of the proverbial scholar's ingratitude,

a failure to appreciate his own debt to his professors; it may have been that Eliot's *literay* vanity (in contradistinction to *personal* vanity, of which he was quite free) had gotten the better of him.

The Humanists themselves were troubled by Eliot's ambivalence. Babbitt envisioned Humanism as a "movement" which would come to dominate modern thought; he was a most effective teacher, and men were proud to be considered his proteges. Babbitt wished to count Eliot as one of these, but Eliot's literary modernism and interest in religion were a heretical departure from Babbitt's original dispensation. Babbitt's polemizing instinct led him to provoke controversy and, though without personal animosity, to employ the metaphor of battle. In 1927 he met Eliot in England as a friend, and convinced him that it was his duty to "come out into the open." This encounter inspired the preface of *For Lancelot Andrewes*, with its tripartite pose of classicism, royalism and anglo-catholicism. At Harvard, Babbitt was heard to say that he intended to "knock the bottoms out" of Eliot and all who would make "his" Humanism a tail to "their" impossible religion. For Eliot had attacked Babbitt's hositility to Christianity, and had shown that, as a Protestant, Babbitt was reacting against the excesses of liberal Protestantism. The answer was not agnostisicm, according to Eliot, but catholicism. Nonetheless the tone of Eliot's attack made it appear that he wished to discredit Babbitt altogether.

Yet Eliot involved himself in Humanism's Battle of Books, and in 1930 contributed an essay to Norman Foerster's *Humanism and America*. Seward Collins, editor of *The Bookman*, took Eliot to task in his "Chronicle and Comment" for 30 March, 1930. "Much of Eliot's influence has derived from the fact that he has served as a channel for Babbitt's ideas," made acceptable as coming from a sensitive and respected creative writer. But Eliot had "devoted three of his infrequent essays largely to casting scorn on a man [for] whom he professes the highest admiration and to whom he acknowledges a large debt. How is this strange procedure to be accounted for? We are at a loss to know." Collins noted a clear contradiction between Eliot's treatment of Babbitt and his treatment of Maurras, whom he went to great trouble to defend, though Maurras "has expressed a more contemptuous attitude toward orthodox Christianity than has Babbitt." The hostility toward Babbitt

Eliot's poetry may be seen as a long meditation on the Flux of Heraclitus, on the impermanence and relativism of the sublunary world by a soul seeking, in philosophy and religion, the security of a world of permanent and absolute value.

Irving Babbitt

was easy to bear, Collins thought, but not the "inconsistency, to say the least, of coupling it with professions of esteem." In a letter to *The Bookman* responding to this attack (31 March 1930), Eliot could only deny that he felt enmity toward anyone, and admitted that the respective dangers and errors in Maurras were far greater than those in Babbitt. Significantly, Eliot confessed that his philosophical position was nearer to that of More, who had been the first to depart from a purely secular Humanism: his *Greek Tradition* was an argument for Christianity from Platonic premises, and gave confidence to Eliot in his course toward conversion.

Eliot first met More as a Harvard senior attending a reception given by the Babbitts; More then enjoyed national prominence as the arch-conservative editor of *The Nation*, the political pulpit from which he thundered against the demagogy of Roosevelt and Wilson and the sensationalism of Hearst. "One of the obligations of any pupil of Babbitt was to learn a proper respect for 'my friend More,'" Eliot wrote in a tribute to P.E.M. in the *Princeton Alumni Weekly* in 1937; "but while one was directly exposed to so powerful an influence as Babbitt's, everything that one read was merely a supplement to Babbitt."

The Greek Tradition gave More a separate identity in Eliot's mind, and around 1928, when More had been for several years a special lecturer in Classical Philosophy at Princeton, they began to correspond about theological and literary matters; in the fall of that year in England they met again. "...It seemed more like the renewal of an old acquaintance than the formation of a new one: More was a St. Louisan, and had known my family; and if he had remained there a few years longer, he would have taught me

Greek as he had taught my brother." They discovered a mutual affinity; and, although seeing each other rarely, they exchanged frequent letters full of personal admissions. The fact that each held the other in great esteem did not, however, preclude criticism, both privately and publicly.

Only an ocean and an age difference of twenty-five years separated them. Both were of New England Puritan stock, and both possessed notable ancestors in sixteenth-century England: Eliot was descended from Sir Thomas Elyot, and More from John Aylmer, Bishop of London, infamous for his persecution of dissenters. Both had their lives changed by the influence of Babbitt (though More was an equal, not a protege) and both had undergone a long process of religious conversion. More too had once considered himself a poet—though he resigned that pretension early. Because of the likeness of their backgrounds, More took pride in the fact that Eliot had achieved the pinnacle of literary reputation, a degree of success which More had never attained. It seemed to others that More enjoyed that success vicariously through Eliot; and why not? Eliot all but owned him as his master in the letters he sent him. But More was still baffled by Eliot's poetry, by his critical pontification, by his contradiction of his own tripartite pose, and by the fact of his expatriation. To Babbitt, More wrote that Eliot "impresses me more and more as an enigma the better I know him." And, he added, "what his *Criterion* really stands for, only the Devil comprehends." (1 July 1931) To the poet himself More personally admitted, "You are for me, intellectually, a magnificent enigma, which I shall never unriddle to my satisfaction." (10 July 1931) Edmund Wilson recalled visiting More's house and hearing the sage remark, "That young man has a screw loose somewhere!"

They differed most dramatically over the very basis of Eliot's fame, his poetry. In a letter to Babbitt, More noted the contradiction between Eliot's criticism and "his own damnable practice as a poet." (8 November 1928) In his excellent essay called "The Cleft Eliot" (*Saturday Review*, 12 November 1932), More attempted to make some sense of the style of *The Waste Land*:

> The writer... appeals to us as one struck to the heart by the confusion and purposelessness and wastefulness of the world about him, and as dismayed by the impoverishment of our human emotions and imagination in a life so divested of meaning and so dull of conscience. And to that world his verse will be held up as a ruthlessly faithful mirror. The confusion of life will be reflected in the disorganized flux of images; its lack of clear meaning in the obscurity of language; its defiance of authoritative creeds in a license of metrical form; its dislocated connection with the past in the floating debris of allusion; while its flattened emotions will be reproduced realistically, without a comment. If there be any salvation from such a whirligig of chance and time it is only into the peace of utter escape—*"Shantih, shantih!"*

But Eliot, More observed, continued to employ the style of disillusion in the poetry of conversion (e.g., *Ash Wednesday*): "The embarrassing fact remains that somehow the poet contrives to carry on the old shop into the new market." Indeed, as More explained in a letter to Austin Warren (11 August 1929), he had asked Eliot shortly after the appearance of *For Lancelot Andrewes* "whether, when he returned to verse, he would write the same sort of stuff that he once called poetry, or whether he had seen a new light." Eliot replied, "NO; in that I am absolutely unconverted." In his letter to Eliot of 21 September 1931, More humbly bore the blame for not being able to fathom the obscurities of *Ash Wednesday*, and suggested that he needed a commentator. "And, confound it, you are too big a man to play tricks with punctuation." Eliot answered, "I am quite aware that I am a minor romantic poet of about the stature of Cyril Tourneur, that I have little knowledge and no gift for abstract thought; but if there is one thing I do know, it is how to punctuate poetry." (28 October 1930)

One cannot simply dismiss More's dislike of Eliot's poetry as resistance to a new fashion. The *Shelburne Essays* reveal More as a very sensitive critic of well-developed taste in poetry, particularly favoring the seventeenth-century so dear to the heart of Eliot. More is well respected for having taken the courageous role of lone voice against the world in other fields; since he belongs first to the field of letters, his judgment of Eliot must receive special consideration. To More the classicist, poety must communicate; Eliot's failure to communicate, therefore, deflated his pretensions to being a classical poet.

Though they are at present out of fashion, time will reveal More and Babbitt as twentieth-century America's two greatest critics.

Dr. John Arscott recalls attending one of the dinners More gave periodically for his graduate students at his Princeton house. The young men had been speaking of their enthrallment with Eliot's poetry; this, to More, was a challenge, and he responded by having the most vocal of the Eliotists read "The Hippopotamus" aloud after dinner. The "enthusiast" read it, More thought, as one might intone Milton. More afterwards asked each person in the room to explain what "The Hippopotamus" meant to him. The air of anti-clericalism ws duly noted, and contrasted with Eliot's present stance of anglo-catholicism. When each had his say, More drew on his cigar and snorted, "It's a meaningless series of pleasing sounds." Then he said, "Now this has the ring of poetry; but what in the name of sense *is* the hippotamus?" Silence reigned, and then the enthusiast cried, "Does it make any difference?" "That's just it!" More replied.

Paul Elmer Moore

In "The Cleft Eliot," More professed admiration for *Ash Wednesday* and praised "the sonority of the lines" and "the cadences of a music which is extremely rare in our free verse. And this is not the melody of merely prettily selected and adroitly adjoined words, independent of their sense, but suggests the profounder harmony—if one could only find it—of an organically constructive genius behind the superficial disarray of the phrases." To P.S. Richards he wrote that *Ash Wednesday* "reads well aloud but is unintelligible." (12 October 1930) More alluded to his liking for this and for *Sweeney Agonistes* in his letters to Eliot. But no matter how he might enjoy, or attempt to enjoy, Eliot's poetry simply for the sound and for the succession of images, whatever they might mean, as a classicist he could never accept Eliot's technique as legitimate. Whenever someone seriously criticized More's doubts about Eliot's poetry, it was observed, More would lapse into silence, and the muscles of his face would tighten. To him, Eliot's poems were "wild mystifications." (Letter to P.H. Frye, 8 September 1931)

A recurring theme in Eliot's letters was his humility before More's learnedness: "I should not care to match my ignorance against your learning; I shall be far less educated at 80 than you were at 30." (10 August 1930) And as he involved himself in socio-political and religious attitudinizing in *The Criterion*, Eliot admitted—

> I am painfully aware that I need a much more extensive and profound knowledge of theology, for the sort of prose work that I should like to do—for pure literary criticism has ceased to interest me. I do not know whether I shall ever have the time to acquire it. And I am not a systematic thinker, if indeed I am a thinker at all. I depend upon intuitions and perceptions; and although I may have some skill in the barren game of controversy, have little capacity for sustained, exact and closely knit argument and reasoning. (20 June 1934)

In his tribute to More, Eliot confessed again his debt to *The Greek Tradition* at the time of conversion: More possessed "a maturity, a weight of scholarship, a discipline of thinking, which I did not, and never shall, possess."

Eliot appears in his correspondence with More as one who spent half his time pontificating (rather than arguing) and half retreating from his pontifications. An instance of this is his attitude toward Joyce, whom he characterized in *After Strange Gods* as profoundly "orthodox." [Eliot had wanted to dedicate that small, unpopular book to More, but felt the gesture to be improper since in it he again criticized Babbitt. (7 November 1933)] Eliot's praise of Joyce intimidated More into reading the works of the Irish novelist. He then published an essay on Joyce in *The American Review* (the new name of *The Bookman*) in which he made some concessions to Eliot, referring to him by name, but endeavored also "to explain by what experience of life and by what theories of art a man capable, when barely more than a youth, of writing the last scene of *The Dead* should have been brought to wallow in the moral slough of *Ulysses* and to posture through the linguistic impertinences of [*Finnegan's Wake*]." More did so explain. Previous to its appearance, Eliot admitted, "I dare say we shall be more agreed about Joyce than you expect. I am probably prepared to admit that he is a great writer gone wrong, so long as it is admitted that he is a great writer, and his errors are of a very different seriousness from these of the majority of talented drifters and provincials of our time." (20 July 1934) "It is quite possible that I overestimate Joyce... or use him as a

Significantly, Eliot confessed that his philosophical position was nearer to that of More, who had been the first to depart from a purely secular Humanism.

stick to beat the others with.... To say that his work is penetrated with Christian feeling is not to say that the man is established in Christian principle and conviction. I mean something for which he cannot, morally, be given any particular credit; an accident, if you like, of birth and education from which he draws the advantage." He felt "regret at the inadequacy" of his lecture-essay, which left his position misunderstood and defenseless. (20 June 1934)

More too criticized Eliot for his treatment of Babbitt: "...After all, you stand vastely closer to Babbitt than you do to [I.A.] Richards and it strikes me as a bit paradoxical that you should be grudging in your dispraise of the latter." (17 November 1933) Eliot excused himself on account of haste, and responded, "Of course I am nearer to Babbitt." (8 December 1933)

In some things Eliot did not hesitate to criticize More. Eliot owned that he had reviewed *The Demon of the Absolute* for the *Times Literary Supplement* (21 February 1929); he gave high marks to the book itself, but then remarked upon the original series of *Shelburne Essays* (which it succeeded in a new series), noting their "positive moral bent of Puritan origin. What connected these pieces of literary criticism was their moral interest, and the implications of his philosophic dualism." By the attribution of "Puritan" did Eliot mean simply to describe, or to stigmatize? The passage echoes Eliot's judgment in *The Sacred Wood*, where he concluded that More's "theory or point of view of morals" was insufficient to sustain the reader's interest through eleven volumes. This tells us as much about Eliot as about More. Though More did not consider himself a Puritan, after all, he decided, a Puritan was not a bad thing to be. Babbitt had once said that to credit the Puritans exclusively with teaching self-denial and discipline was "paying them an extravagant compliment." Perhaps Eliot's disrelish of More's moralizing criticism bears out More's observation in Eliot of a certain aestheticism all but intolerant of ethics: "In the lack of any philosophy of life, or the conception of the possibility of such a philosophy, the younger men have frankly turned aside to purely aesthetic criticism and to the discussion of the means of producing artistic effects.... On the other hand T.S. Eliot who has a philosophy of life in the form of religion seems to despair of connecting it with art, and so compromises by the same sort of disjunction." (Letter to P.H. Frye, 3 October 1929)

The rest of the More-Eliot correspondence was devoted mostly to theological debate, which Eliot called a kind of "correspondence chess" compared to the controversy that could be enjoyed in person. (10 August 1930) Their chief bone of contention was the existence of a Dantesque hell. To More, an all-benevolent God could not create such an eternal chamber of horrors; but Eliot replied that he believed in a divinely created state "more terrifying than ordinary pain and misery" which made him walk "in daily terror of eternity." (2 June 1930) More showed this letter, or one like it, to a friend, and said, "By God, I wish I could say that!" The jocular spirit of their exchanges appears in More's boast that he would give up ten good dinners "to convict one devout anglo-catholic of heresy." (To William P. Trent, 24 March 1931) Eliot expressed pleasure with the manuscript of *Pages from an Oxford Diary*, which he attempted to place with a publisher, unsuccessfully, on account of More's stipulation of anonymity.

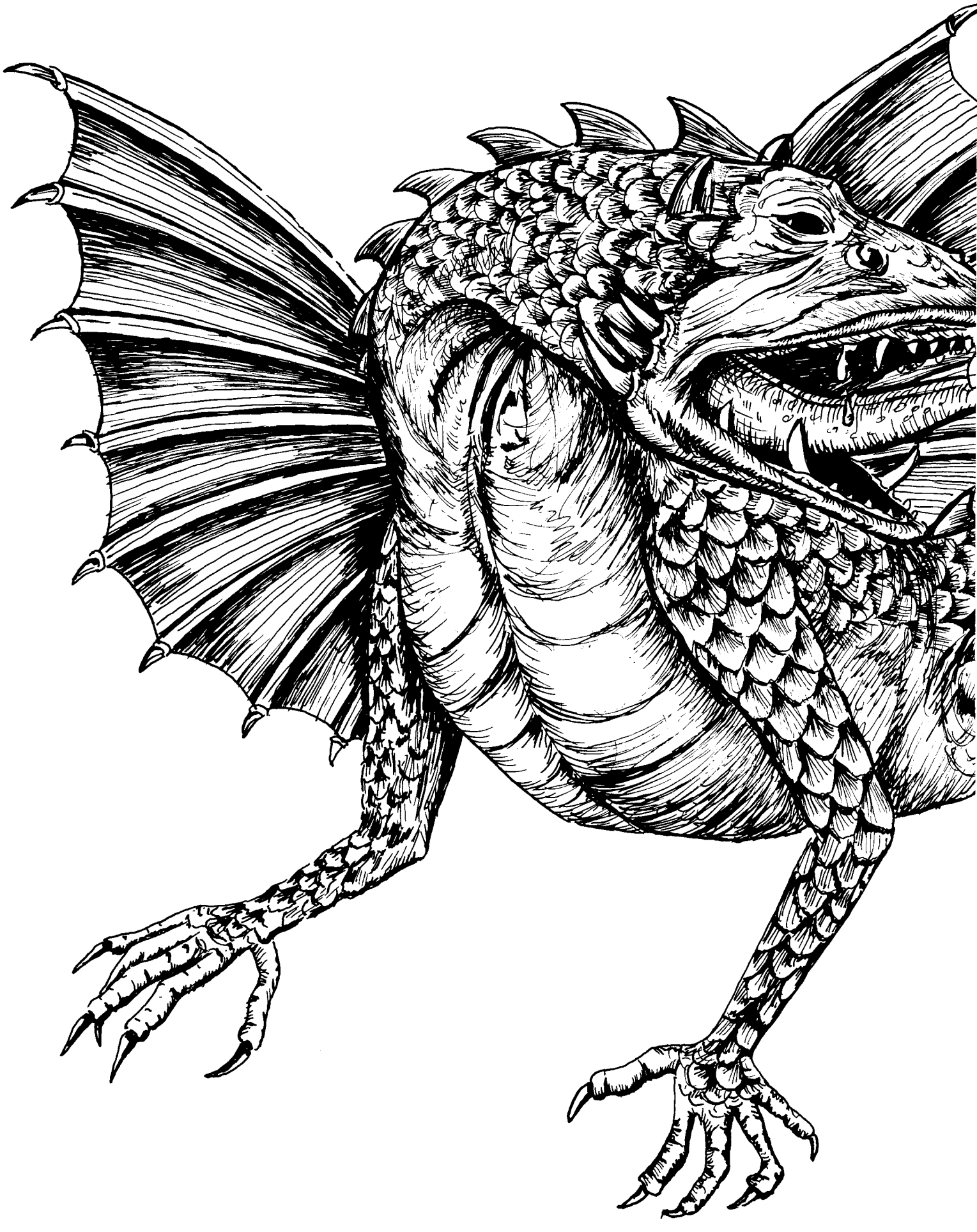
More was one of very few people in whom Eliot confided his intention of seeking a separation from his wife. He undertook his American tour of 1932-33 in order to effect that separation, during which he gave the lectures which were collected as *After Strange Gods*, in which he made several hasty remarks due to lack of preparation which he felt obliged later to qualify at length. More was instrumental in bringing Eliot to Princeton in March of 1933. After a lengthy introduction by More, who took great pride in presenting the poet, Eliot lectured rather disappointingly on Ecclesiastes, and then greeted a few of More's proteges at his house.

Eliot first met More as a Harvard senior attending a reception given by the Babbitts; More then enjoyed national prominence as the arch-conservative editor of* The Nation, *the political pulpit from which he thundered....

As More lay dying in his library in 1937, he had the satisfaction of hearing his daughter read Eliot's tribute in the *Princeton Alumni Weekly*. Of More and Babbitt, Eliot therin at last admitted, "these seem to me the two *wisest* men that I have ever known."

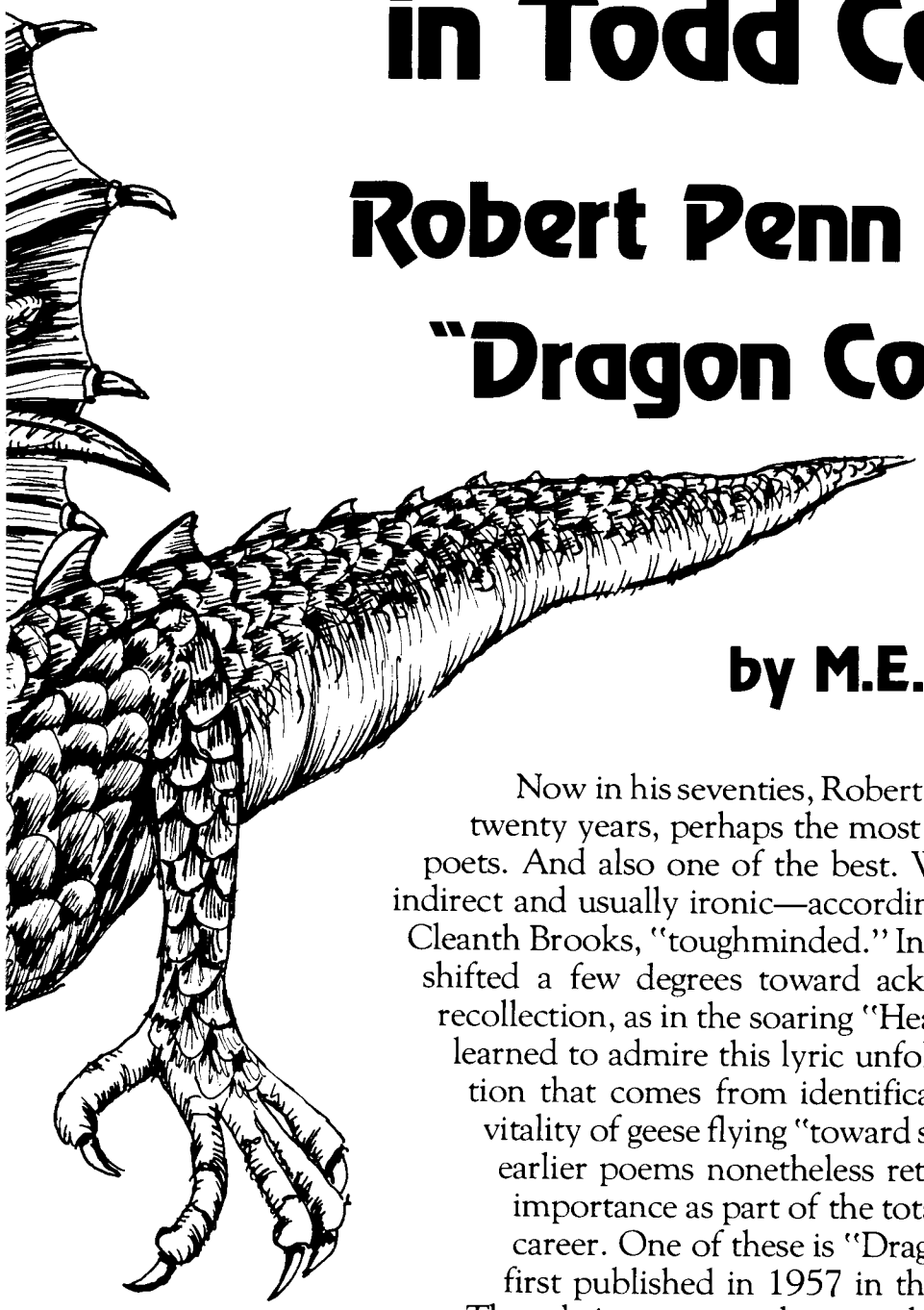
In submitting the tribute to Professor Willard Thorp (14 January 1937), Eliot remarked, "I suspect that in some of his views on contemporary political affairs [More] was a somewhat conventional conservative; but I am not sure." Here Eliot's failure to appreciate More is most evident. More was not a "conventional" conservative, as anyone knows who has read his *Aristocracy and Justice*. The ideals of classicism, royalism (taken as the tory instinct) and anglo-catholicism are far more authentically embodied in More than in Eliot, whose literary taste tended towards a post-romantic cult of neurosis, whose politics were a Maurrasian nationalism with disturbingly anti-capitalist overtones, and whose religion was a perversely ultramontane Anglicanism. But this portion of the Eliot enigma must be unriddled elsewhere.

(The permission of Mrs. T.S. Eliot, Mr. Arthur Hazard Dakin, and the Princeton University Library to quote from unpublished letters in the Paul Elmer More Papers is hereby gratefully acknowledged.) ▣



The Beast in Todd County:

Robert Penn Warren's "Dragon Country"



by M.E. Bradford

Now in his seventies, Robert Penn Warren has been, in the past twenty years, perhaps the most productive of modern American poets. And also one of the best. Warren's earlier poetry was often indirect and usually ironic—according to the description of his friend Cleanth Brooks, "toughminded." In his more recent verse the tone has shifted a few degrees toward acknowledged delight and thankful recollection, as in the soaring "Heart of Autumn." Though we have learned to admire this lyric unfolding and to share in the consolation that comes from identification with the spirit and amazing vitality of geese flying "toward sunset, at a great height," Warren's earlier poems nonetheless retain their interest, indeed grow in importance as part of the total pattern of their creator's artistic career. One of these is "Dragon Country: To Jacob Boehme," first published in 1957 in the *Yale Review.*

Though it concerns the arrival of the Beast, Warren's "Dragon Country" is not really apocalyptic. The baleful visitation which the poem reports is continuous, scattered, personal—and will teach everyone a lesson. This beast comes and goes, but is never quite out of mind. Moreover, though the acts of the dragon are intermittent and localized (in Southern Kentucky), they have become more and more serious. According to Warren's persona, it is no longer possible for the residents of Todd County to ignore their occurrence, or

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From Generations of the Faithful Heart: On the Literature of the South, *by M.E. Bradford. Published by Sherwood Sugden, La Salle, Illinois, 1982. Reprinted by permission.*

...the Beast is Warren's image of "the irrational horrors that circumscribe the ruined world." And as the old poets realized, such horrors move us to cherish all the more shelter and a good fire and the company of those we love and trust.

to explain away the incidents. In this section of the South, the *grim nihtsceat a* has left a permanent mark. Though civilized life will continue without the immediate release of the final trump, it will carry with it the knowledge that nothing is safe, that not every event is subject to explanation. Warren's dragon is the tangible embodiment of a surd, irreducible reality, one that is not open to scientific research, acts of Congress, or judicial decrees. Moreover, its effect on Todd County specifies that men are better off in having mystery/evil/danger dramatized in such an unambiguously concrete image as that of the "worm" which, according to St. Mark, "shall not die" (Mark 9:40). "Dragon Country: To Jacob Boehme" reads as follows:

This is the dragon's country, and these his own streams.
The slime on the railroad rails is where he has crossed the track.
On a frosty morning, that field mist is where his great turd steams.
And there are those who have gone forth and not come back.

I was only a boy when Jack Simms reported the first depredation,
What something had done to his hog pen. They called him a God-damn liar.
They said it must be a bear, after some had viewed the location,
With fence rails, like matchwood, splintered, and earth a bloody mire.

But no bear had been seen in the county in fifty years, they knew.
It was something to say, merely that, for people compelled to explain
What, standing in natural daylight, they couldn't believe to be true;
And saying the words, one felt in the chest a constrictive pain.

At least, some admitted this later, when things had got to the worst—
When, for instance, they found in the woods the wagon turned on its side,
Mules torn from trace chains, and you saw how the harness had burst.
Spectators averted the face from the spot where the teamster had died.

But that was long back, in my youth, just the first of case after case.
The great hunts fizzled. You followed the track of disrepair,
Ruined fence, blood-smear, brush broken, but came in the end to a place
With weed unbent and leaf calm—and nothing, nothing was there.

So what, in God's name, could men think when they couldn't bring to bay
That belly-dragging earth-evil, but found that it took to air?
Thirty-thirty or buckshot might fail, but then at least you could say
You had faced it—assuming, of course, that you had survived the affair.

We were promised troops, the Guard, but the Governor's skin got thin
When up in New York the papers called him Saint George of Kentucky.
Yes, even the Louisville reporters who came to Todd County would grin.
Reporters, though rarely, still come. No one talks. They think it unlucky.

If a man disappears—well, the fact is something to hide.
The family says, gone to Akron, or up to Ford, in Detroit.
When we found Jebb Johnson's boot, with the leg, and what was left, inside,
His mother said, no, it't not his. So we took it out to destroy it.

Land values are falling, no longer do lovers in moonlight go.
The rabbit, thoughtless of air gun, in the nearest pasture cavorts.
Now certain fields go untended, the local birth rate goes down.
The coon dips his little black paw in the riffle where he nightly resorts.

Yes, other sections have problems somewhat different from ours.
Their crops may fail, bank rates rise, loans at rumor of war be called,
But we feel removed from maneuvers of Russia, or other great powers,
And from much ordinary hope we are now disenthralled.

The Catholics have sent in a mission, Baptists report new attendance.
But all that's off the point! We are human, and the human heart
Demands language for reality that has not the slightest dependence
On desire, or need—and in church fools pray only that the Beast depart.

But if the Beast were withdrawn now, life might dwindle again
To the ennui, the pleasure, and the night sweat, known in the time before
Necessity of truth had trodden the land, and our hearts, to pain,
And left, in darkness, the fearful glimmer of joy, like a spoor.

The narrative of the poem is followed by a brief summary of what the dragon has done to the thinking of these Kentuckians and that is followed in turn by the line toward which all that reportage and comment has been building in slow and steady increments through the first ten stanzas: "And from much ordinary hope we are now disenthralled." The "language for reality" that does not depend "on desire, or need" occurs to us only when we are brought up against home truths by the kind of dramatic experience that cancels "ordinary hope" and "disenthralls" us

from the modern varieties of the endemic human delusion—that by the agency of science or politics we can "fix it," whatever our problems may be. To accomplish so drastic a correction, the source of that dramatic experience must be outside of our mind and beyond the control of our technology. Only then do we get the point. But there is a positive side to this process, and to the realization that it brings. "Necessity of truth," the recognition of our contingency, though painful, is finally the precondition of all human delight. As Warren has written elsewhere, from 38,000 feet the optimism of Emerson, that "there is no sin/Not even error...", seems plausible. At that altitude there is "nothing specific" from "the process of living" to prevent us from "forgiving God," and equivalent presumptions. Residence in dragon country, with hearts "trodden...to pain," precludes such dwindling and emptiness.

A poetic *peripeteia* which speaks of being "disenthralled" from the restraints of "ordinary hope" is language which calls to mind the poetry of Warren's mentor, John Crowe Ransom, or the work of his old friend (and fellow Kentuckian) Allen Tate. The burden of "Dragon Country" is certainly compatible with that of many poems by Ransom, Tate, and other members of their circle. And with Warren's exploration of the sanguine rationalism of Thomas Jefferson in his long poem, *Brother to Dragons*. But the texture of Warren's verse is distinctively his own in this and other lyrics, an idiom contained within a prosody, mixing the homely with the eloquent in a fashion which suggests the cadence of reflective discourse—Warren's own inimitable speech. In the unfolding of "Dragon Country" this balance of "the pure and impure in poetry" shows to best effect in Warren's account of how Todd County in the beginning attempted to explain away what "couldn't be true." First, Jack Simms' neighbors called him a "God-damn liar." Then they spoke conventionally of bears. Finally, looking at the evidence of his hog pen, they "felt in the chest a constrictive pain"; or, confronted with the ruin left by other dragon raids, they turned away from looking at the place of death. Then they pursued the terrible track of this monster, and only then they fell silent, lied about those "who have gone forth and not come back," and avoided being out of doors at night. The sequence of reactions is plausibly structured, full of the earthy, the commonplace, the painfully particular. "When things had got to the worst," Todd County believed in the Beast, but was even then still mistaken when it "got religion," yet "prayed only that the Beast depart." For until the "language for reality" which their local apocalypse provided can be replaced by some other image equally resistant to their desire to deceive themselves, such a departure would be quite premature.

The moral universe which the dragon stalks by night...is ruled over ...by the chief of all dragons, who had once a brighter, fairer shape but grew to admire himself too much in contemplating his own perverse freedom.

What Warren intends by "a fearful glimmer of joy" could easily be mistaken for incipient Manicheanism. But such a reading of the passage is incorrect. True enough, the report of monsters lurking in the back country always arouses a stir of public interest and even of anticipation. There is a suggestion in Warren's poem that human beings were made to live dangerously amidst perils, that ennui is the only alternative to the kind of drama in our lives that necessitates confrontation with pain and death and dread. Or, in the langauge of Victor L. Strandberg, "Man's spiritual destiny...requires that knowledge of the world's evil must be accepted and ingested entirely."

Speaking of great reptiles only, I can think of several recent instances of remarkable reports. In northern Alabama in 1955 and then in 1956 and 1958, a great serpent (as big around as a telephone pole) was seen on a number of occasions. Traffic was delayed for some time while the snake crossed the highway. Near a lake in Wellington, Kansas, in the late summer of 1969, "a big snake" terrorized an entire community. In Indonesia, in 1979, huge pythons that had eaten several people attacked bulldozers which were clearing land near their lair. Such stories can be collected from any careful reading of American rural newspapers published during the course of a summer. And this is to say nothing of Big Foot and other "monsters" which haunt the swamps and mountains and the fringes of our consciousness, appearing and disappearing with such ease and rapidity that we must believe that though huge they can also fly.

As Strandberg has observed, the Beast is Warren's image of "the irrational horrors that circumscribe the ruined world." And as the old poets realized, such horrors move us to cherish all the more shelter and a good fire and the company of those we love and trust.

In subtitling the poem "To Jacob Boehme," Warren raises the question of why there should be suffering and evil and uncertainty in a world controlled by a just and loving God, the God to whom the Baptists and the Catholics in "Dragon County" have prayed for deliverance from the "belly-dragging earth-evil." These prayers are "off the point" in the context of Warren's natural theology because, to quote Strandberg again, "...dread gives the world its tragic possibility of a larger meaning." I say "natural theology" because Warren's focus is on human nature, not providential design. But it is not to strain the text when we find in this poem and in his other works suggestions of something like the doctrine of the Fall. The moral universe which the dragon stalks by night is post-lapsarian. It is ruled over, according to Jacob Boehme, by that chief of all dragons, who had once a brighter, fairer shape but grew to admire himself too much in contemplating his own perverse freedom. In the view of

a modern interpreter, Nicolas Berdyaev, Boehme himself was "tormented" by the reality of evil, by the presence in the world of powers irrational and malign in their impact on the fortunes of men. But if we are incapable of "admitting the element of horror in life, conceding the element of mystery, facing the terrifying truth," then, as Boehme realized, we cannot think of ourselves as free or hope by our actions to know any of that joy in the hope of which we persist.

In Boehme's language, the "divine light" usually manifests itself through something other, in a process of contrast. And if the "other" is unreal, then so is our freedom to resist the principalities and powers in our mind for which it is a symbol. To a remarkable degree, Boehme's *Six Theosophic Points* is a gloss upon the concluding lines of Warren's "Dragon Country." The dedication fits, if we examine its propriety. By making men aware of how fragile and easily threatened are the good and precious things in their lives, they are restrained from taking for granted what they otherwise might lose. Moreover, the dragon was a marvelous way of preventing the matter of Warren's poem, especially its last nine lines, from becoming too propositional and abstract. The entire poem is, in one restricted sense, a "justification of God's ways to man," though based more on a knowledge of the creature than on a presumption concerning the secret ways of the Great I Am. Of the Deity, nothing is implied beyond His awareness of *how we are*: how inflated in our own conceit. To be put in mind of our contingency, some shock is necessary. Warren as poet says something of this sort frequently—as, for an instance, in "Summer Storm (Circa 1916), and God's Grace." There the numinous is suggested by violence in nature. Kentuckians are rendered speechless by "God's flail," a power beyond their ken, mysterious and "wholly other," discouraging to moral pride. A beast does even better.

Flannery O'Connor has observed that Southerners have "a distrust of the abstract, a sense of dependence on the grace of God, and a knowledge that evil is not simply a problem to be solved but a mystery to be endured." Southerners tend to doubt that the "...ills and mysteries of life will eventually fall before the scientific advances of mankind." Living with a dragon, of one sort or another, prevents such delusions. Though our finitude is hidden from us by the pattern of modern life, a few of the old reminders of providential authority persist. Concerning their function, that of preserving the memory of a better ontology, Warren has written some of his finest verse. He offers no easy hope. Yet, more recently, and out of such a sense of our mortal station, he advises those initiated in home truth,

> We must try
> To love so well the world that we
> may believe, in the end, in God.

If we may infer so much from the evidence of his verse, in this last labor he is more and more frequently successful. ■

The Bob Jones Case

The controversy raised by the IRS attack on Bob Jones University refuses to go away. Since 1970 the Internal Revenue Service has been attempting to deprive Bob Jones of its tax exempt status on the grounds of racial discrimination: the fundamentalist school forbids interracial dating on scriptural grounds—although it does, in fact, accept Black students. In January of this year the Justice Department dropped the case against Bob Jones—clearly on the recommendation of the White House. But this action aroused such a virulent protest from Civil Rights Leaders and Professional Liberals, that the Supreme Court has felt impelled to reopen the case. Upon petition of the NAACP, the Court appointed a prominent Civil Rights lawyer as a "special prosecutor" to present the case against BJU. As Bob Jones III commented on this decision, the Court was, in effect, "creating an issue to be litigated."

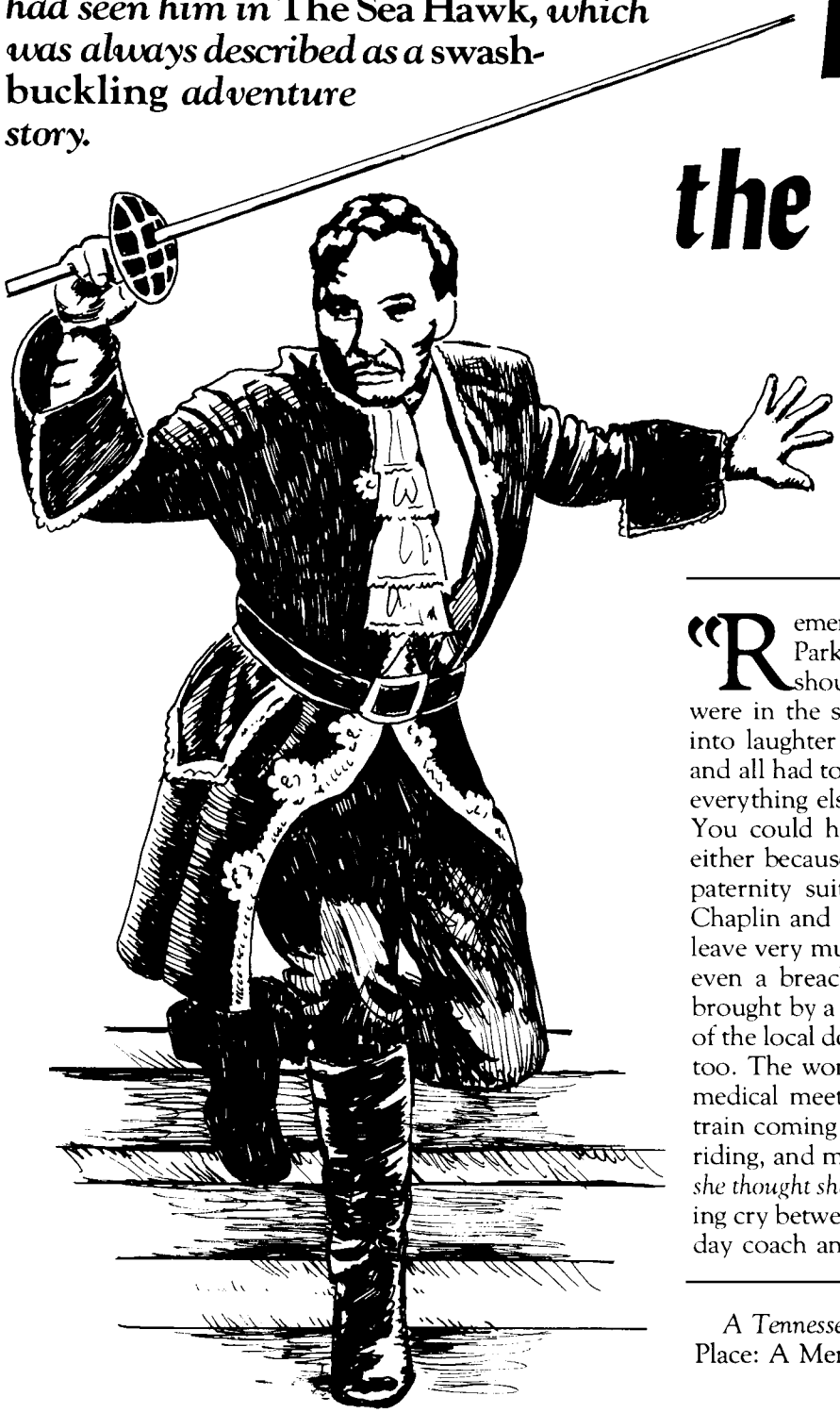
What exactly is the stake in all this? First and most obviously is money. Now, BJU is not worried about paying their $21 tax bill—they claim to have spent $800,000 on the case already. The real financial significance lies in the area of tax exempt donations. Most people, given the choice between two charities, would prefer to give to the one which is tax exempt, because their contribution is tax deductible. The stronger—and more basic—issue in the case is religious freedom.

The critics of BJU have said, over and over, that to grant the school a tax exempt status is the same thing as an official approval of BJU's racial discrimination. Bob Jones' response, however, is practically unanswerable: if tax exemption constitutes approval, then the government approves of the National Abortion Rights Action League, Hell's Angels, the Satanist Church, and the Communist Party.

The complex of legal issues raised by the case may be left to the lawyers to wrangle over. However, many Americans are disturbed by the Federal government's pretension to know what is best for us, even in the realms of the mind and the spirit. It is more than a little ironic that the same government which forbids prayer in public schools is willing to pronounce on the wholesomeness of the religious doctrines espoused by a private college. Under some circumstances, a close cooperation between church and state may be tolerable or even beneficial, but that is certainly not the case today. For the Federal Government to regulate religion in the United States would be a little like having Nero editing and interpreting the Epistles of St. Paul. The government which presumes to regulate a Christian institution must first itself be Christian.

—Thomas Fleming

And Errol Flynn did it all. Ann Louise had always been in love with him ever since she had seen him in The Sea Hawk, *which was always described as a* swash-buckling *adventure story.*



Remember the Errol-Mo!

by Robert Drake

"Remember the Errol-mo!" That was what Ann Louise Parker and her best friend, Martha Alice Craig, kept shouting at each other all that summer after they were in the seventh grade. And then they would explode into laughter because it was a private joke between them and all had to do with sex and where babies came from and everything else connected with "all that," as they called it. You could hardly get away from it anywhere right then either because that was the year when there was a rash of paternity suits brought against movie stars like Charlie Chaplin and Errol Flynn, and the Memphis papers didn't leave very much of it to anybody's imagination. There was even a breach of promise suit right there in Woodville, brought by a woman, who said she was a nurse, against one of the local doctors; and it received generous press coverage too. The woman even testified that she had gone off to a medical meeting in Chicago with the doctor and, on the train coming back, left the day coach, where she had been riding, and moved back into the Pullman with him *because she thought she deserved it.* And so that became another rallying cry between Ann Louise and Martha Alice: "Out of the day coach and into the Pullman!"

A Tennessean, Mr. Drake's most recent book is The Home Place: A Memory and a Celebration.

Anyhow, Ann Louise's mother said she didn't know what the world was coming to and it was a good thing her own mother wasn't still alive. What would she have thought if, right there staring her in the face at the breakfast table, was a front-page story in the *Commercial Appeal* detailing the number of times and the places, even, where and when all the "intimacies" had gone on? She said she was surprised they didn't have *pictures*! And why didn't they publish more "elevating" items anyway? Everybody knew things like that went on in the world, but why *dwell* on them?

But Ann Louise's father just told her not to be an ostrich and she might as well join the twentieth century, which was going on its merry way with or without her, and there was no use worrying what her mother would have thought because she would have had to make the best of it all, just like everybody else. And it might all have done her a power of good, to open the doors and windows and let in a little air: he well remembered, he said, that she never even acknowledged the existence of sex and babies were never spoken of till they were born. And then of course it was all very "sweet." Women didn't have *legs* either: their shoes were just sewed to the bottom of their skirts! But then Ann Louise's mother said that was quite enough: he had made his views known. And besides, her mother had too admitted that there was such a thing as sex in the world: why, before she had married, her mother had told her, whatever she did, never to economize on her nightgowns. But then she remembered Ann Louise's presence and hushed.

It had all started that last year, back in the seventh grade, when their teacher was Miss Elizabeth Johnson, who was young and pretty and had lots of beaux, and Ann Louise was still taking music lessons from Miss Caroline Walker, who was well past middle age and had a thin gray mustache; and that year her recital piece was "To a Water Lily." Anyhow, Miss Elizabeth was the first young teacher Ann Louise and her friends had ever had.. Before that they were all old maids, like Miss Julia Davis that pulled her girdle down in a very business-like way whenever she had anything important to say, or else old women, like Miss Caroline, who had either outlived or otherwise disposed of their husbands and now had the decks cleared for action on their own terms. And they all of them *meant business* too; in fact, Ann Louise sometimes thought they ought to have "no foolishness" carved on their tombstones when they died—if they ever did.

It was all of it a dark and mysterious subject to most of them: they hardly even mentioned it to each other, let alone any of the boys.

Anyhow, some time after Christmas that year, back in January, when everything was dull and depressing and there wasn't much to think about except your first semester grades, one of Miss Elizabeth's friends—a young woman only married the year before—came by the classroom one day to see her. And it was obvious that she was going to have a baby almost any minute: Ann Louise even thought she might not be able to get back home before the stork arrived. You could tell all that even underneath what Ann Louise had heard her mother call a "maternity dress." Not that she had ever opened her mouth to Ann Louise about any of "all that" except for the barest minimum of information about what she could expect when her periods began. What Ann Louise knew about "all that" she had picked up mostly from the movies and *Life* magazine and her friends, most of whom didn't know much more than she did. There *was* a column called "Tell me, Doctor" in the *Ladies' Home Journal* every month, which was all about women going to the doctor with the most hair-raising things in the world wrong with them; but Ann Louise was usually too scared to read it.

It was all of it a dark and mysterious subject to most of them: they hardly even mentioned it to each other, let alone any of the boys. It just sat there like an open secret that everybody skirted gingerly around and everybody knew about and knew everybody else knew about too but didn't mention. Nobody could bring himself to let on to it in public. But Miss Elizabeth's friend broke the ice for them. Because when Miss Elizabeth stepped out into the hall to speak to her, the whole class went up in a great giggle; and nobody even had to explain why. There was all that rampant pregnancy, to say nothing of the antecedent sexuality, whose fruits were all too obvious; and not even an ostrich could have done much in the way of ignoring it. It was all simply right there in your face, as Ann Louise remarked to Martha Alice later on; it *was* a fact of life.

And it was from then on that the whole crowd began to make references to sex, even sometimes tell a mildly dirty joke, which they didn't always understand, even the boys. And they all began to relax, as though to say, we don't really know what this is all about, but it's apparently part of the whole package deal and somehow has to be dealt with and dealt with now. (Ann Louise even heard her father tell her mother one night after she told them she had just been invited to her first dance and he *thought* it was about time for the sap to begin to rise. But she couldn't hear what her mother said to that, and she wasn't even sure she understood.) At any rate, some of the things that had always puzzled Ann Louise began to come into focus, like the plots of several novels and operas—even ones she had had to listen to on the radio on Saturday afternoons to report on at Miss Caroline Walker's music club, when she had much rather have been at the picture show watching Hopalong Cassidy or Johnny Mack Brown. (She didn't approve of Gene Autry or Roy Rogers because they *sang*.) But she still didn't see why there had to be such a hullabaloo raised about Little Emily and Hester Prynne and Marguerite. O.K., so you got caught with a baby: you should have been more careful. That was what Ann Louise thought. On the other hand, she couldn't see any particular charm in marriage: people just wanted to settle down and get turned into old middle-aged people like her parents quicker than a wink. *She* wasn't going to have any of that: *she* was going to go to New York and get a job as private secretary to some-

Errol Flynn

body like Cary Grant or Tyrone Power and have her own penthouse apartment like Betty Grable. *She* was going to have fun.

And her views on the matter had become solidified when World War II broke out and young men were going into the service all over the place and there was a whole slew of elopements and "secret" marriages, usually performed down in Mississippi or over in Arkansas because Tennessee had stricter marriage laws then. For one thing, you had to wait three days to hear from the "blood test," which always puzzled her. But when she asked her mother about that, she just said it was something Ann Louise, *with her background*, would never have to worry about, thank God, and that was all she needed to know right then. And the elopements and "secret" marriages, Ann Louise noticed, were almost always followed by a baby—and sometimes within a very few months. Of course, she had heard some of the older girls say the records down in Mississippi or over in Arkansas could sometimes be rearranged (for a consideration) to show that the marriage had taken place *a full nine months* before any baby appeared on the scene. And Ann Louise didn't doubt that either, from such a jumped-up, jack-leg way of doing things. If you were just determined to get married, she thought, you ought to do it with banners and bugles—a big church ceremony and veils and trains and the whole shooting match. In other words, drama. And Ann Louise was always great on drama.

That was part of the excitement of sex, she thought: it had ceremonies, as in mating dances and practices, and it had romance and glamor, at least in the movies and in novels. Of course, there was the other side—where people got caught off base and had babies they didn't mean to and where "ladies" got turned into "fallen women." And of course there was always white slavery right around the bend. Again, she had learned "all that" in her reading and at the picture show. (Her parents didn't seem to worry what she read or what she saw. And Ann Louise used to wonder at that—how trusting they were—when she got older. But again, maybe it was part of the ostrich act: things were all right as long as you didn't acknowledge openly you knew what was going on.) And so it was all dramatic, whether glamorized or sordid. But there was another side to sex too, and that was what Ann Louise and her friends were only beginning to realize that summer after they had been in the seventh grade.

And Errol Flynn did it all. Ann Louise had always been wildly in love with him ever since she had seen him in *The Sea Hawk*, which was always described as a *swashbuckling* adventure story. And Ann Louise never knew what that meant except that when you ran around having sword fights and jumping off the decks of ships, all for the honor of Queen Elizabeth, who was played by Flora Robson, or else to win favor in the eyes of your lady love, Brenda Marshall, who was really married to William Holden, and all of it somehow mixed up with the wicked Spanish Inquisition and the Armada, *swashbuckling* just sounded right: a combination of sword play and gallantry whether on ship or on shore. And then of course there was the time Errol Flynn played General Custer and *died with his boots on* (which was the name of the picture) and Olivia De Havilland, who played Mrs. Custer, slid to the floor in the most graceful faint Ann Louise had ever seen when she got the tragic news. But of course they didn't show you any *scalping*: it was all horses and bugles and dashing plumes.

So anyhow Errol Flynn was now being sued by some "starlet" or other for being the father of her unborn child, which she said she was determined to have and no bones about it. (No back-street "illegal operations" for *her*, she said; and Ann Louise wasn't even sure what that meant, just like in *Blossoms in the Dust* when Greer Garson, who was a *moral crusader*, shouted down into the Texas legislature, from up in the gallery: "Bad girls don't *have* babies!" It was all very confusing.) Anyhow, Ann Louise didn't know just how the girl had any legal hold on Errol Flynn: after all, she had presumably known what sort of risk she was running when she had "granted him the last favor," like it said in some of the older novels. And the more fool she. So Ann Louise didn't see what she had to complain of, but then she had always heard that California was a peculiar state. And she didn't doubt they might even have a special Department out there just to deal with the private lives of movie stars. Because the movie magazines were always telling you what the Hays Office or the Production Code wouldn't let you do in the movies, like have twin beds closer together than two feet or whatever and then, if a man and woman were on a bed together, they had to keep at least three feet on the floor! And she well remembered when David O. Selznick had had to get special permission just to let Clark Gable as Rhett tell Scarlett, "Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn!"

So her attitude now toward Errol Flynn wasn't one of disillusion or disappointment really: it sort of went with his daring roles on screen to be something of an adventurer elsewhere. Ann Louise really didn't care how much *notoriety* he got, which was her mother's word for publicity whether good or bad. But she didn't think much of the girl who was

trying to get all his money just because *she* hadn't had the guts—or the sense—to say no. And besides, from all the testimony, which she couldn't wait to read in the paper every day, Ann Louise didn't see how anybody could know who the baby's father really was. Just like in the novels, the "starlet" had apparently "distributed her favors freely."

And so when the court returned a verdict of "not guilty," Ann Louise was tickled to death because it now meant that Errol Flynn could keep on swashbuckling and romance wasn't dead either. (And apparently his name was almost a byword for that in Hollywood. Some comedian even made a joke over the radio once about a great lover who was so quick on the trigger he was "in like Flynn"; and he got cut off the air too! Or that's what Martha Alice told her.) Anyhow, Ann Louise was delighted Errol Flynn didn't have to go to jail or even pay a lot of money in damages; and she couldn't wait now for him to make a movie with Bette Davis (another Warner Brothers star, so there wouldn't be any problem about "loan-outs") that was wild and passionate and naturally fatal. And then they could both just act all over the screen. Of course, Bette Davis played mainly two roles: she was either doomed or damned, sometimes both. And in her secret heart, that's what Ann Louise really wanted to be, even more than Betty Grable with her own penthouse apartment. But anyhow she thought Bette Davis would really be worthy of him—that is, of course if she couldn't be there herself.

So it was all a great victory for romance—*and* sex—as far as Ann Louise was concerned. And somehow it was all a great victory for *fun* too. And maybe even something that went beyond fun. From the way he acted both in the courtroom and outside, you could tell Errol Flynn didn't make any big deal about sex: it wasn't dirty and it was all perfectly natural. And it could be very enjoyable too, but you shouldn't kid yourself about it either. It was all something like the frame of mind she thought Rhett Butler must have been in when he refused to marry the girl he was supposed to have compromised: he said they hadn't "done" anything and the girl was a fool. That was the first thing Scarlett ever heard about him, Ann Louise remembered; and he had gone up in her estimation right then. Anyhow, there was no need for that "starlet" to get up on a high horse now about it all: she had known what she was getting into. When she said as much to Martha Alice, Martha Alice said maybe she ought to be more sympathetic to the woman: wasn't that what the *double standard* was all about? But Ann Louise said she had heard one of her mother's old-maid cousins say time and time again that, where men were concerned, women were such fools.

So long live Errol Flynn, as far as Ann Louise was concerned. That was when she and Martha Alice went on to invent their new slogan: "Remember the Errol-mo!" And that of course was based on what they had read in school about Davy Crockett and the Alamo. It wasn't the same thing of course, but somehow Ann Louise felt like Davy Crockett wouldn't have taken anything off a "starlett" any more than he did the Mexicans, and he had died with his boots on too. And she thought it would be a very fine thing if there were more men around like him. She already felt that way about Errol Flynn. ⊠

Partisan Quotations

Any people anywhere, being inclined and having the power, have the right to rise up and shake off the existing government and form a new one that suits them better.

Abraham Lincoln, Speech in the House of Representatives, 1848

If by the mere force of numbers a majority should deprive a minority of any clearly written constitutional right, it might in a moral point of view, justify revolution—certainly would if such right were a vital one.

Abraham Lincoln, First Inaugural, 1861

The following definitions appeared in the Spartanburg, South Carolina, Carolina Spartan *on October 3, 1850. The more things change....*

Nationalist: One who contends zealously for the rights, privileges, interests, and honor of the Northern states.

Sectionalist: One who advocates the constitutional rights of the Southern states.

Compromise: A bargain in which Southern rights are sacrificed to Northern prejudices.

States Rights: Certain old doctrines believed by men in the dark age, but now ranked among the mistakes of early education in backward sections.

Political economy: The art of making money flow like the Gulf Stream—from the South to the North.

A PARTISAN CONVERSATION

Michail Makarenko has suffered beyond the comprehension of any of us whose experience with life has been gained in a non-communist-bloc country.

A Rumanian Jew, Makarenko was separated from his parents at the age of eight, during the Nazi invasion of his native land. The communist orthodoxy that he was taught in the state orphanage failed to take permanent hold on his mind primarily because he was influenced—converted to Christianity—by a group of Orthodox Russian soldiers, who adopted the boy as something of a company mascot in 1942.

Makarenko grew up to become an art historian, art critic, teacher and author widely published in the Soviet Union before he was first arrested in 1963. Charged with being an espionage agent for B'nai B'rith, his persecution by the Russian police state was doubly harsh because he was (a) a dissident who sought to organize a party of laborers in Leningrad and (b) a Jew.

For those "crimes" he served eleven years in various Russian prisons and concentration camps, including the main Soviet political prison at Lefortovo.

Makarenko, now in exile, met with representatives of The Southern Partisan *in Washington. This extraordinary conversation took place between Makarenko; our publisher, Charles Scott Hamel; our Washington Editor, Sam Francis; and Charles Goulsby, the Assistant Director of Communications for the Senate Republican Conference Committee.*

MAKARENKO: I hope your magazine will develop and be popular, first because you are newly created and secondly because you are conservative.

PARTISAN: *Thank you. Mr. Makarenko please describe for us your early life and background in Russia and how you came here in the first place.*

MAKARENKO: My background is exactly that of the average Soviet human being. I am 100% Soviet. I was educated to scratch your throat out, and I was taught to daydream of the time that my turn would come to scratch out an American throat. But a positive thing happened to me. I came under the influence of people who were believers, Orthodox Russian believers, and it came to be that these people, these believers, began to show me things and I gladly took them in.

PARTISAN: *When you say believers, do you mean Christians?*
MAKARENKO: Yes, Orthodox Christians. Twice I was, how do I say now, blessed by soldiers. First in the trenches, and the second time was in church as we were beating back on the advance of the enemy, we found refuge in a church.

PARTISAN: *You were fighting in the Army?*
MAKARENKO: Yes. I was the son of a Colonel, ten years old and serving in the Red Army, and this spiritual dream, this dream of freedom, was implanted in my mind. Since then I have noticed how such dreams implanted in young people's minds do have results. There becomes sort of a split mind. Mainly, what I learned from religion at an early age is that killing is not altogether a good thing to do, maybe even bad. There was a struggle in my conscience between what was planted by the Communists and their education, and that which was planted by others mysteriously, quietly and full of hiding. Then all of a sudden I came to a realization that I am living in a country of killers, and total lies. A country where words mean exactly the opposite of what they seem to say.

I was educated as a communist in a child hostel, where children are orphans, without parents, and this meant I was given continuous pure propaganda by the communists. Some of my colleagues in different circumstances were able to get minute whispers, from grandmothers, mothers or fathers. Fortunately, in the library I found books, classics, which I literally consumed, and everything that I read in these books said one thing, at least the great classics: don't take arms and don't kill; resist with every breath you take, and that is what I did.

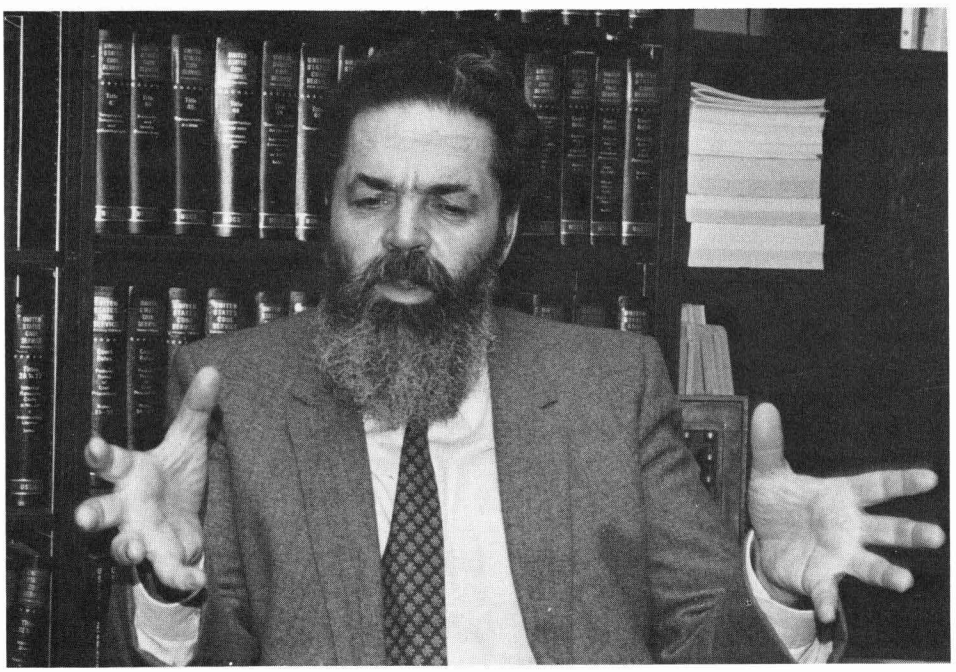
PARTISAN: *Were these the classics of Russian Literature? What is the most influential?*
MAKARENKO: I quickly felt the lies in the Soviet Literature, and put it aside.

PARTISAN: *What is the most influential book that you ever read?*
MAKARENKO: The life experiences of the French writer, Montaigne.

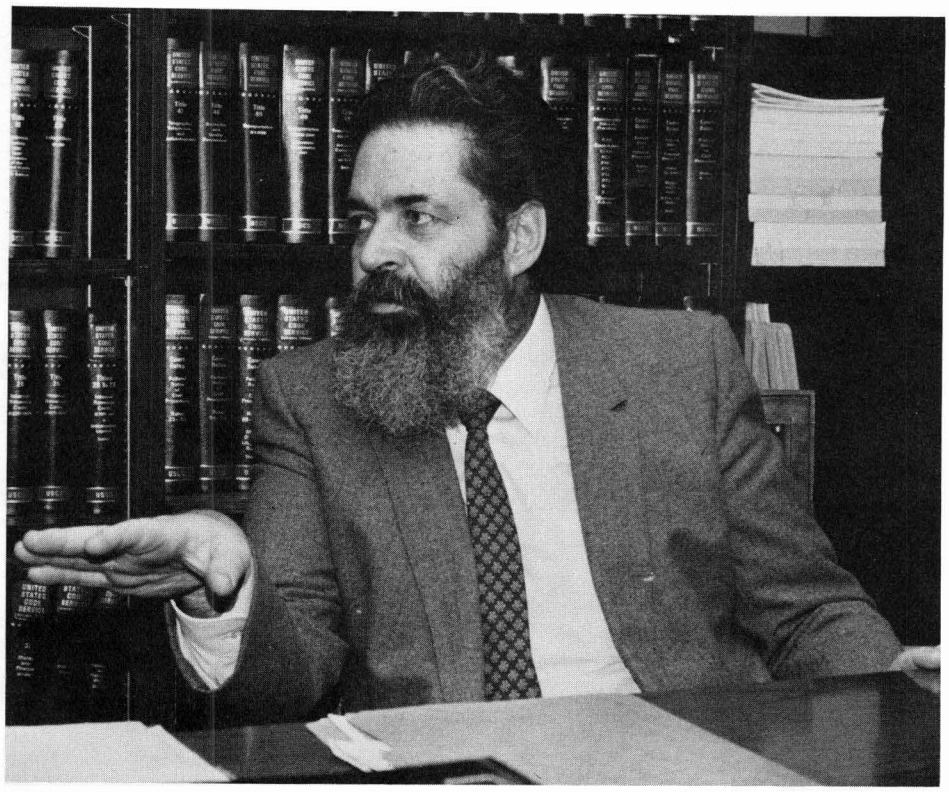
PARTISAN: *Did you become an artist?*
MAKARENKO: I am not an artist, I am an art teacher.

PARTISAN: *Why did you go to prison originally? What was the cause?*
MAKARENKO: Several reasons. For a long time I had been known in the files of the KGB. First of all, in 1953, I got married in church, a public wedding. Not only did I get married in church, but it was on the first day of May, which is the day observed by the Soviet State for the solidarity of workers. I spent two months searching Leningrad for a church that would agree to marry me on the first of May, and couldn't find one. This information was being fed back to the KGB. I did in the end, find a church located 60 kilometers from Leningrad in which the minister was so old that they didn't know if he was going to die today or tomorrow. The whole village came to the wedding.

Ten years following the wedding, I organized a strike in defense of human rights. And this, I can tell you, was the first such strike done within the State Codes of the Soviet Government. I gave copies of the State Codes to my colleagues at the job, to show documentation of our grievances. And for some reason, these colleagues looked to me for leadership because they knew that I was taking courses at the University at night. And I would say to them, "I can't help you with anything because the power is in your hands. Why don't you read the State Codes, the Laws?" I kept insisting that the power was in our hands. I told them to form trade unions and elect good men as leaders. In everything that I told them, I said that this was within the constitution, within the State Codes. They came to the conclusion that they couldn't find anybody who was willing to be elected. I said to them, "Well, that's fine, why then elect me? I am not afraid. We're operating within our legal rights."



PARTISAN: *Did you think you would be arrested?*
MAKARENKO: It was hard to know what might happen. Often they killed people for that, they didn't arrest them. But we really wanted to try to organize under the laws. Then the KGB, the director of the plant and officials of the regional party committee all came running to accuse us. To their surprise, we took a vote on whether we wanted the director or the KGB men to speak to us, a hand vote. The workers then came to the realization that they could prevent the director from addressing them and not only that, but could throw them out of the room. With this realization of power the workers became ecstatic with joy, and the biggest problem was to keep them within the narrow confines of labor laws, or labor practices.



PARTISAN: *Where did this take place?*
MAKARENKO: This was in Leningrad, a factory manufacturing concrete pieces. Right away they wanted to raise their hand against Soviet rule.

PARTISAN: *Were you sent to prison after this? Or sent to the camps?*
MAKARENKO: First my children were taken from me, and secondly my house. I was expelled from the University and fired from my job. And gradually they started inventing things that would get me arrested, finding a way to get me into psychiatric hospitals, or to put me into some kind of camp. I did not wait to see what they were going to do. I took off to Siberia, and there I established a non-conformist painting art gallery. We studied works of art by painters and artists forbidden by Soviet Rule. Everything would have gone very well but somehow the *London Times* wrote about us, a large article. And this exposure cut our throats. Next I organized a covert illegal organization. For three years they tried to catch us but they failed.

PARTISAN: *What did this organization do?*
MAKARENKO: It was an illegal, all union, organization of workers. Our aim was to get to address the Supreme Soviet and lay out our proposals. Our representatives met only with the representatives of neighboring socialist parties, and we only visited the embassies of brotherly, neighborly, socialists neighbors. And for some reason, even though we did this, for three years, they were not able to catch us. The only thing that we wanted from these brotherly types of socialist parties was that our party of workers be allowed to take part in the meetings and conferences of the communistic socialist party, which was to take place in Moscow 1968. The crux of the matter was that Soviet law does not forbid the creation of workers in communist parties. All it says is that the Red party is the main governing party. Aside from that, there could be another three hundred parties. And that's the kind of party we created. We were never accused of breaking the law. We were just caught; we were not accused. For two years, we were in preparatory work to attend communist preliminary meetings, communist party preliminary meetings. These were conducted in Budapest, and we were outraged that we did not receive invitations to the preliminary party meetings in Budapest. So we announced that we did not accept the legality of the Budapest meetings. We announced that we did not accept the decision made at the preliminary meeting because we were not a party to it. Instead we gave Hungarian Socialist Party the right to represent us during the meetings. The KGB was enraged and started looking for us all over. We made an announcement that we were sending three men illegally to the conference and the KGB arrested all Soviets that had anything to do with the conference in Budapest.

PARTISAN: *What happened as the end result?*
MAKARENKO: The end result was that they did catch us.

PARTISAN: *I would like to ask questions about the Soviet dissidents in general, can you tell us approximately how many there are in the Soviet Union?*
MAKARENKO: A "dissident" in Russia is translated in the following terms. One who thinks differently from others. In other words, this means that these are people who do not think in terms of the communist ideology. So I would have to answer you that there are 260 million of us. But in fact some of them pretend to be observing the ideology but in actual fact they do not.

PARTISAN: *Some speak out more than others. Are there dissidents in the higher echelons of government?*
MAKARENKO: Being a dissident can take many forms. Sometimes it is a struggle from the one sitting next to you in the chair. That is the struggle of those in power. Everybody else is waiting for when this sort of thing will come to an end. Everybody understands that it has got to come to an end.

PARTISAN: *How will it come to an end?*
MAKARENKO: You have to understand that many citizens in Russia are working to correct the problem. In the first instance, what is being done is that they are educating the children, telling them that it's all lies. In other cases, the worker comes to work and tries hard to do nothing. Scientists and inventors are trying not to invent anything. Farmers and people who work in State farms are doing everything they can so that there are no eggs, no milk, no produce, and as you know they are quite

successful in this. Then maybe you will ask the question, how are they living? They take that little which they have produced for their own consumption. That which can't be stolen, they ruin.

The Soviet press is full of information about what is being ruined in the country. Understand please that this is not ordinary theft. A man might try and steal a radio, he might take even the couch, or the mirror for his own use. But then why did he take a knife and cut up the one that he couldn't take. He breaks that which he can not take. Some people when they are leaving work leave the faucet trickling. Some leave on the faucets of a tank car which has valuable mechanical oil in it, and the third one unloads his cement not underneath cover where it might be protected, but just a few yards out in the open. This takes place with everything in the country. It is a form of revolution. These are not crazy people, this is intentional sabotage to the regime. You have to understand that after work they are going home, and on the smallest plot of land they have, you'll get fine crops of tomatos, potatos, and they have meat, peas, and bacon. The people in the state farms have at their private disposal only 1½% of the total land available in the Soviet Union, and on this 1½% of the land, they are producing 30% of the total agriculture production of the Soviet Union. Others are coming home and are fixing suits, waxing floors, and they are doing it well, with quality, but they stop doing this when they go to work the next day, and their hands start just lagging on their sides.

PARTISAN: *What kind of future would you like to see in Russia? Would you like to see a democracy, would you like to see Capitalism, what kind of government and society would you like to see in the Soviet Union?*
MAKARENKO: If you are talking about what I foresee, we are looking forward toward a free market place. It already exists today. Everything is available but it is illegal, it's in the form of a Black Market now. I would like to have a system based on the ordinary demand and supply of the free market place.

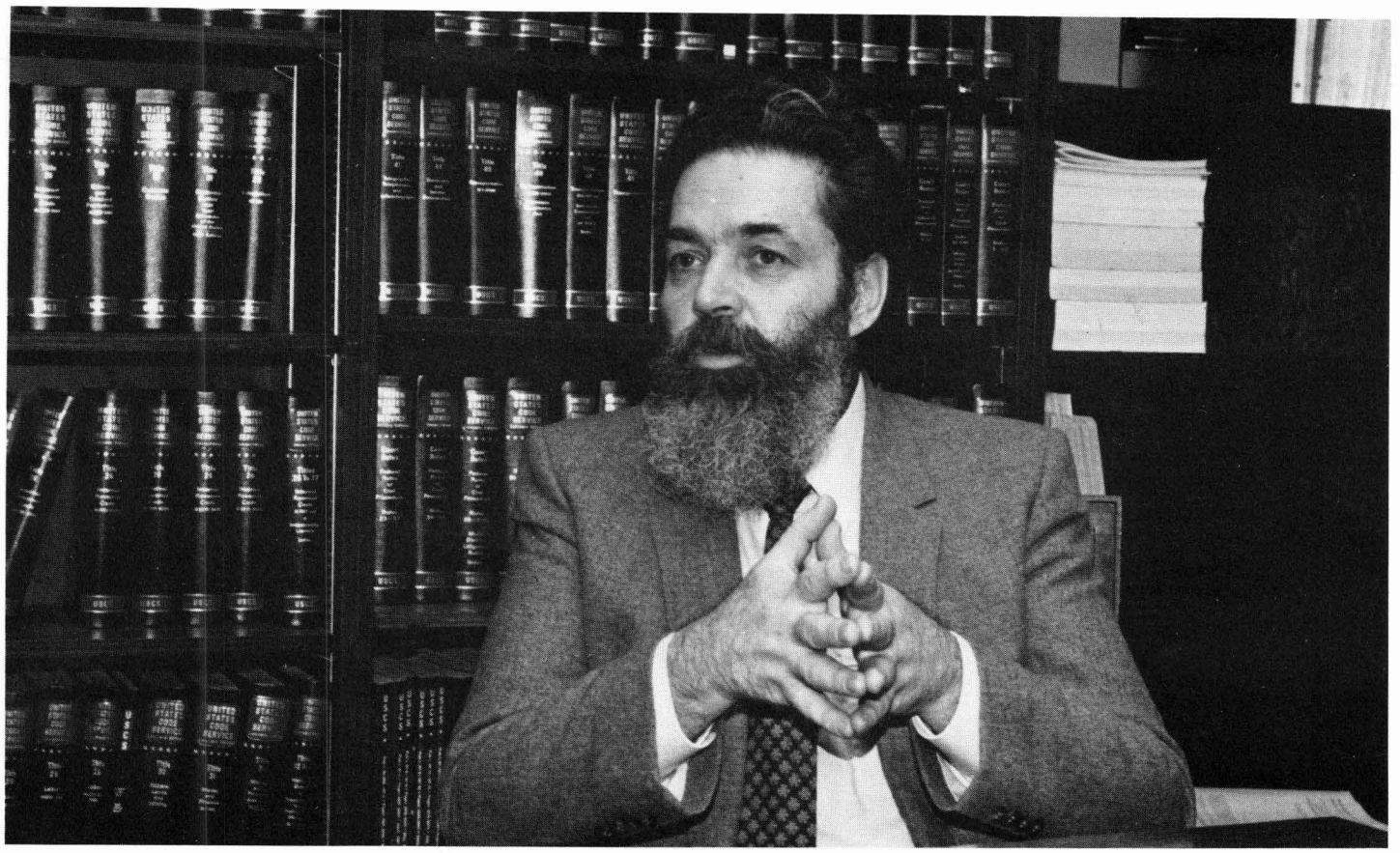
PARTISAN: *What kind of government?*
MAKARENKO: In all likelihood a democratic government. That is my desire. But the immediate problem is to simply create a state where people are not killed or forced into labor. These are the two aspects of the question: Do not kill us but also do not make us slaves. This problem cannot be quickly solved. State farm workers cannot keep bread away from the communist power while the West is providing it. And while Russian patriots, engineers and scientists are disrupting the system of science, bringing the machinery to halt, the West is providing the Soviets with new technology, keeping the system alive.

PARTISAN: *Do you believe that the West should trade with Soviets at all?*
MAKARENKO: In the Soviet Union there is at the present time a civil war. The majority is revolting atainst the minority Soviets. What we are talking about is not about trade with the Soviet government. What we are talking about is the West getting in this war on one side or the other. Practice has shown that every time trade with the Soviets takes place, the West has provided help and relief to the communist regime.

PARTISAN: *Why do you think the West does that?*
MAKARENKO: I think that the West does not understand what is going on in the Soviet Union. The West does not open its eyes and see what is going on over there. Governments in the Western countries do not consider it immoral to deal with the Soviet government because there is the appearance of tangible results, but only in the short term. This appearance of profit and trade with the Soviet Union, is treacherous. No matter how much profit you make when you sell a thief or criminal a knife or a gun, you will never have concrete confirmation that he won't use it against you.

PARTISAN: *Many people in the West say that if we trade with the Soviets, this will improve the living standards there and the regime will become more liberal.*
MAKARENKO: Those who say that are the ones who are also looking for immediate profit no matter what. These views are simply absurd. What is going on in the Soviet Union today is actual slavery. Tens of millions of people are working forcibly. It is immoral to have any kind of relationship with such a state. The American public has to decide if it is moral to trade with a concentration camp. These Soviet concentration camps today are holding millions of people. And the Soviet regime is prepared to invade the whole world. As we talk today, not only are they preparing to invade the whole world, but are effecting it just like a cancer grows.

PARTISAN: *Do you think the United States or the West is morally weak?*
MAKARENKO: I don't want to say that the West is weak. The West is



very strong. It is not important who has more rockets, tanks or atomic bombs. The crux of the matter is in decisiveness as to whether they should be used. The West does not have the decisiveness to attack the Soviet Union. The West is only looking for ways to protect itself from it.

PARTISAN: *Why does the West not have that decisiveness?*

MAKARENKO: I can only say that it is self evident that the West will not attack. But the Soviet government states in its constitution that sooner or later it must to do away with the capitalists. This is Marxist ideology.

PARTISAN: *What do you think of Solzhenitsyn's criticism of the West?*

MAKARENKO: I think Solzhenitsyn has the right to say whatever he pleases, because that's the reason he came out. That's why he's in the West. I am criticizing the West for one thing, and that is the failure to denounce the Red Terror that began 65 years ago. And up to now not one parliament in the West has judged the decree that created the Soviet regime. The Soviet economy cannot function without the concentration camps. Without terror, the Soviet state will come to a halt. The West can denounce it, call it into judgment and refuse to help it. But nobody's done it so far.

PARTISAN: *What do you think of President Reagan's policies toward the Soviet Union?*

MAKARENKO: I'm in rapture over President Reagan. He made an historical decision on the pipeline, even if his motives are not entirely correct. The Soviet gas pipeline should not be built under any conditions. President Reagan seems to be tying it solely to the Polish matter, as if construction would be approved immediately if Lech Walesa was allowed to sleep with his wife. I understand the complexities of foreign policy. But the United States is strong enough to conduct a moral policy and to demand that other countries conduct themselves in the same fashion. I believe Mr. Reagan is the man to bring such a policy to the world.

PARTISAN: *Could you tell us a little something about your relationship with Alexander Solzhenitsyn? Do you know him personally? Have you corresponded with him?*

MAKARENKO: He's a great writer. He is also a former prisoner. I've had the great honor of receiving several letters from him. He knows of my activities, and I know that he approves.

PARTISAN: *Are you familiar with the Reverend Billy Graham?*

MAKARENKO: I know this Billy Graham as one who has eaten, or stuffed himself, with black caviar in Moscow, and I think that that is the way he is going to wind up in history, and in encyclopedias. This is a man who is pathologically in love with black caviar.

PARTISAN: *Well, thank you very much, Mr. Makarenko, it's been a pleasure and we very much appreciate your taking your valuable time.*

MAKARENKO: I am very happy that in America there are people as well as organs of the press that are interested in what I have to say. ⊠

CRITICUS

THE ACHIEVEMENT OF M.E. BRADFORD

One of the most eloquent and energetic advocates of the traditional Southern view of the world in recent years has been Professor M.E. Bradford of the University of Dallas. At equal ease in literature, history, or political thought; equally eloquent whether addresssing the Philadelphia Society or the Fort Worth Sons of Confederate Veterans, Professor Bradford has given new life and relevance to the teachings of his mentors, the Nashville Agrarians. His work has been embodied in dozens of essays and addresses, and most recently in three books. Elsewhere in this issue is printed an essay from Bradford's just published book on Southern literature, Generations of the Faithful Heart, *the title of which is taken from the last line of Donald Davidson's poem, "Lee in the Mountains." Below, the distinguished American Constitutional historian Forrest McDonald, of the University of Alabama, reviews Bradford's book on the Founding Fathers, while our associate editor, Professor Clyde Wilson, does the same for Bradford's book on the American Revolution.*

Part I:

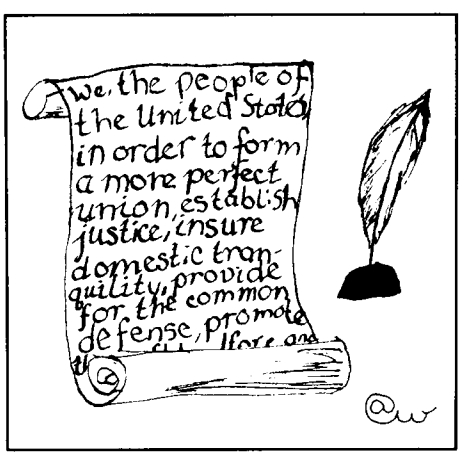
by Forrest McDonald

M.E. Bradford, *A Worthy Company: Brief Lives of the Framers of the United States Constitution.* Marlborough, NH: Plymouth Rock Foundation, 1982.

Most readers of *Southern Partisan* are aware of who M.E. Bradford is, and all should be: he is a brilliant and prolific scholar and an unreconstructed Southerner in the Vanderbilt Agrarian tradition. He is currently working on a monumental undertaking, the preparation of a new edition of Jonathan Elliot's *Debates of the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution.* The present volume, a collection of biographical sketches of the fifty-five men who wrote the Constitution, is a by-product of that larger work.

The sketches are utter gems. Each begins with a general appraisal and is followed by a brief survey of the delegate's pre-1787 career, an analysis of his behavior and attitudes in the convention, and a summary account of his post-convention life. To each sketch Bradford brings not only great learning but also, to paraphrase what he says of the Pennsylvania delegate Gouverneur Morris, wit, good humor, great literary gifts, and a completely formed political philosophy.

A few samples will illustrate the flavor. Regarding Morris himself: "His unsentimental evaluation of human nature often shocked his opponents in these debates. The depravity of man was his axiom. And for advanced views of a metaphysical human equality, he had only cheerful



contempt: 'He who wishes to enjoy natural Rights must establish himself where natural Rights are admitted. He must live alone.'"

On the great Delaware delegate John Dickinson: "An instance of Dickinson's protective concern for institutions rooted in place and history, *grown* but not *made*, is his constant reference to the advantage of giving influence in the Congress and in other features of the fundamental law to the thirteen state legislatures.... With many of his associates he foresaw the ominous prospect of a greedy proletariat in America's future, a propertyless mass ready to vote itself the properties of other and better men. But he also agreed with the decided Antifederalists that concentrated national authority might readily be converted into an instrument for creating an artificial aristocracy of 'placemen,' friends of the administration in power made wealthy by economic privilege and sponsorship."

Bradford clearly admires the great Virginian George Mason, perhaps because he believed that "the proper conclusion of a revolution made against the abuse of authority was not to provide for a repetition of that abuse;" or because Mason "had learned from Roman history, [that] power is most safely entrusted to those who have something better to do and who prefer a private station." Just as clearly he dislikes the Pennsylvanian James Wilson, "a metaphysical progressive who thought of the state as an instrument for the pursuit of perfection,...a *philosophe* of democracy who first attacked the peculiar institution and then bought slaves. A dialectician who could 'bewilder truth in all the mazes of sophistry, and render the plainest proposition problematical'....[Wilson went] so far as to suggest that the highest purpose of union was the 'reformation' of the human mind."

Except in a brief introduction, Bradford offers few generalizations about the delegates as a body, preferring instead to let the data and the insights cumulatively overwhelm the reader. The author is, among other things, Christian, contemptuous of the French Enlightenment, a foe of

egalitarian democracy, a believer in States' rights, and an opponent of judicial activism. Without the slightest twisting of the evidence, his sketches show that the vast majority of the delegates shared each of these beliefs and attitudes. For instance, fifty (and possibly fifty-two) of the delegates were Christians.

The flaws in the book are few and inconsequential. There are a handful of typographical errors, the most common and curious being a semicolon which, gremlin-like, pops up in the middle of a sentence half a dozen times without any relation to the context. Gouverneur Morris was 28, not 24, when he lost his leg; John Blair of Virginia, though properly identified in the sketch, is called James Blair in the heading (p. 171); Nathaniel Gorham, though well and accurately depicted in the sketch, is unaccountably called Robert Gorham in the Introduction (p. xii). But these are trivial shortcomings which can be corrected in subsequent printings.

There is something here for everyone, even the specialist. I have been studying the Founders for a third of a century, and I have learned from this book—for example, that no less a nationalist than Gourverneur Morris advocated secession of New York and New England during the War of 1812, and maintained that secession was warranted under the Constitution. Conservative general readers will find abundant surprises and delights at how closely the Founders' ideas parallel their own. Thinking liberals, if that is not a contradiction in terms, will have their eyes opened. And devotees of the *Southern Partisan* will have their favorite prejudices confirmed.

Part II:

by Clyde N. Wilson

M.E. Bradford, *A Better Guide Than Reason: Studies in the American Revolution*. La Salle, Ill.: Sherwood Sugden, 1979. Hardcover and paperback.

The world's largest, most ancient, and most exemplary republic observed its bicentennial not long ago. One would expect such an occasion to be a time of rededication and renewal, of restoration and recovery. Instead, we had a value-free official celebration that was expensive, dull, and that touched only a small minority of citizens. At least the New Leftists of the People's Bicentennial, unlike the middle class bureaucrats of the official observance, took the American Revolution seriously. Still, they failed to persuade most of us that the redheaded Southern planters, hardbitten New England fishermen, and cold-eyed backcountry riflemen who fought it should be understood chiefly as predecessors of Mao and Fidel.

All the wealth, talent, and global power of the American mass media did not succeed, as far as I know, in producing one memorable show that portrayed the American founding meaningfully to the American people. We were allowed to read about Jefferson's sex life and the rascal Aaron Burr and to view the romanticized adventures of African villagers snatched to bondage in America. But apparently the deeds of George Washington, Patrick Henry, Sam Adams, or Francis Marion, the events of Lexington, Saratoga, Valley Forge, or Kings Mountain, do not provide any stuff which the masters of the media find marketable.

All in all, one suspects that those Americans who came closer to partaking of the spirit of the Revolution were that small number who dressed up in uniforms and fired off muzzleloading muskets. At least their intent was to commemorate an inheritance that was genuinely, if sometimes dimly felt, rather than to celebrate in an orgy of self-congratulation something appreciated perversely or not at all.

The lack of energy, conviction, and meaning in the bicentennial provides the best evidence, though other proofs are all around us, of how alienated the American people have become from their roots. In fact, we are on the verge of ceasing to have any identity at all *as a people*, of ceasing to acknowledge any kinship that transcends allegiance to a shared standard of living.

If you agree with the foregoing analysis, then you will also agree with Jeffrey Hart, Professor of English at Dartmouth University and an editor of *National Review*, who writes in the Introduction to *A Better Guide Than Reason* that some of the essays in this book "are among the most important of our time." For Bradford, in a stunning feat of intellectual courage and originality, has done nothing less than to provide us with the necessary means to rediscover our founding, the original basis of our commonwealth.

Under Bradford's direction, we can grasp for ourselves the identify of the American people at the founding of the Republic, free and clear of the obfuscations and misrepresentations piled up by succeeding generations of partisans. He has made it possible for us to see clearly for the first time in more than a century the nature and import of that process by which the scattered English inhabitants of North America articulated themselves into a republican realm. He tells us in a full-blooded and circumstantial account what our forefathers were like, what they believed and why, what they meant and *what they did not mean* in the great documents to which they pledged their lives, fortunes, and honor.

A providentially peculiar combination of training and heritage laid the groundwork for this achievement. Bradford, Professor of English and American Studies at the University of Dallas, is by vocation a student of literature and by heritage a Southern Agrarian. For him, as for our Founding Fathers, politics, history, and literature are not separate, mutually exclusive, and merely technical activities. History and literature are moral and aesthetic studies, the ends of which are the cultivation of good men. And since the quality of men is defined, collectively, by the quality of their citizenship, politics and literature are by nature a seamless fabric. It is part of Bradford's feat that he has miraculously restored the fabric.

As a student of literature, and particularly the highly political English

literature of the century prior to the American war, he reads the great documents of the American founding with a lost apprehension of the connotations of the language in which they were written. As a Southerner, he reads these same documents with an inherited appreciation of how the American communities that produced them actually worked. For as Bradford points out, Southern things are the most American of American things.

Bradford's eleven essays have a three-fold thrust. One group aims at recovering the American Revolution that was understood by the men who made it. Characterized in the English tradition out of which it came, this Revolution was "Old Whig" or "Country Whig." It looked backward rather than forward; it was preservative of customary values and arrangements; it happened in reaction to innovations of the British government and was not a manifestation of a radicalized impulse for remaking the world by a utopian calculus. Many would agree with Bradford that the American Revolution was a conservative event, but no other writer has matched his portrayal of why and how that was so.

Among this first group are essays on three Founding Fathers whose neglect in recent years has been, Bradford suggests, deliberate. A full understanding of these men and of how representative they were would undermine many partial and peculiar interpretations that have been put forward of the meaning of the Revolution. The three are Patrick Henry of Virginia, John Dickinson of Pennsylvania who, though unknown today was perhaps the most revered American of his time except for Washington, and William Henry Drayton of South Carolina.

Among the essays designed to recover the import of the Revolution we can place also the initial one which takes up our forefathers' identification with the history of republican Rome. The Roman Republic, after which Americans modelled their own, was one in which citizenship consisted of shared manes and mores, access to a common law, and a strenuous sense of patriotism—not a republic of undiscriminating access to rights and privileges.

Bradford's second group of essays have to do with the derailment of the Old Whig tradition in the 19th century. He finds in the implemented political thought of Abraham Lincoln "a rhetoric for continuing revolution." Lincoln's selective reading of the Declaration of Independence, with an unduly emphasized and distorted interpretation of the concept of equality, injected into the American body politic a messianic style and disintegrative ferment that still bedevil us. Paradoxically, Lincoln's inheritance remains a crippling and self-contradictory impediment in the train of many of those Americans who style themselves conservatives.

All in all, one suspects that those Americans who came closer to partaking of the spirit of the Revolution were that small number who dressed up in uniforms and fired off muzzleloading muskets.

Two essays provide the background for Lincoln's derailment of American tradition. One is a devoir to Russell Kirk, the other a comparison of Benjamin Franklin's autobiography with Thomas Jefferson's only book, *Notes on the State of Virginia*. The American tradition was bipolar. Counterposed to the predominant Old Whiggery of the South and Middle States was the Puritan inheritance of New England which implanted deeply in the American fabric a latent proclivity for destructive rebellion as opposed to the restorative effort of the original War of Independence.

In laying out the fundamental differences between Jefferson and Franklin, often thought to be on the same wing of the Revolution, liberals and cosmopolitans together, Bradford is at his most subtle and skillful. They were very different kinds of cosmopolitans and liberals. Jefferson, whatever his private opinions, was as a public man first and always a Virginian, navigating with reference to the fixed star of Virginia law and custom. Franklin pre-figured the modern American—a rootless solipsist, literally a self-made man, gliding and manipulating his pleasant and benevolent way through a world that lacked any stable identity.

Bradford's third point relates his understanding of the American Revolution to the populist tradition. He identifies himself clearly with those Americans who live actually or in spirit "up at the forks of the creek"—those who feel government primarily as an unfriendly outside force aimed at manipulating the settled and revered things—from Bacon's Rebellion of the 1670's to the anti-busing campaigns of the 1970's. He affirms the ancientry and legitimacy of this way of thinking and suggests that it still lies endemic though unrecognized in the American body politic.

American scholars, as a rule, value intense analysis of small questions and effect a scientific neutrality. Small questions often lead to sterility and neutrality sometimes leads to enslavement to some abstract and future-centered ideal. Bradford's breadth of learning in history, literature, and political thought is grandly anomalous. He writes with old-fashioned eloquence, informed by the love of a living community of people.

The best revolutions are restorative —what Jefferson had in mind when he advocated a little one now and then. Not revolution that uproots the healthy trunk but that which cuts away the excrescences and overgrowths so that the trunk may breathe. In that sense no one who reads and digests *A Better Guide* can fail to be revolutionized. We had thought that the great Southern political tradition —that of Patrick Henry and Jefferson, John Taylor and John Randolph, Calhoun and Davis, the 19th century agrarians and the 20th century Agrarians—was dead. Not so; it is alive and well and those worthy spokesmen of the South have found a worthy successor in M.E. Bradford.

Conservatism Ex Cathedra

by Michael Bordelon

George Will, *The Pursuit of Virtue and Other Tory Notions*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982.

George Will is a stout defender of a particular brand of conservatism, one described several times by himself as "cultural conservatism." This "true conservatism," as he calls it, is the common thread which unites those of his otherwise disparate editorial columns which he has reprinted in his latest book, *The Pursuit of Virtue and Other Tory Notions*. "Statecraft is soulcraft," he has written, and it is clear that he regards his own efforts in journalism as a venture in soulcraft. Small wonder then that he has little patience or regard for conservatism's other strains, believing as he does that they are merely concerned with matters of lesser significance. The priority is evident in various of his political commentaries, as when he notes that neoconservatism is not culturally oriented:

> Neoconservatives, unlike we few who comprise the saving remnant of true conservatism, do not have stained glass minds. Neoconservatives do not really mourn the passing of the thirteenth century: feudal codes, heraldic banners, serried ranks of bishops, the lower orders tugging at their forelocks—that sort of good stuff.

Convinced as he is that "true conservatism" is identical with "cultural conservatism," he has proceeded to make his own conservatism rather eclectic. In several ways his conservatism is quite conventional. He is, for instance, no radical democrat, preferring instead to retain intact the finer features of our republic; he readily admits that "excesses happen when the masses make laws by referenda." Also along conventional lines he has been both in print and on television a convinced and convincing anti-Communist. And, yes, it is true that he is generally "anti-change;" he is perhaps at his most articulate in describing the revolutionary nature of a multiplicity of experiments in social engineering in recent decades.

Therefore, let us give George Will his due: as a proponent of cultural conservatism he has often been brilliant. In his various columns on politics, famous persons, charitable enterprises, social trends, and much else, he has shown an admirable ability to understand modern phenomena in terms of cultural perspective. With superb insight he has observed that the modern world has launched a series of devastating assaults on our social institutions, and he is very much aware that these institutions have been undermined by the successes (and excesses) of both radical liberalism and laissez faire capitalism.

Unfortunately, his passion for his love—the "true conservatism" of culture—has blinded him to the virtues and charms of conservatism's other strains. "Capitalist conservatism" and states' rights (or Southern, or local) conservatism are to him mere pretenders to the title of what he has called "the noble word 'conservative.'" Thus, while he is willing to give our free market system its due and admit its productivity (and, as he says, even Marx did that), he is also sharply critical of the debilitating effects capitalism's very successes have had on the stability of the social framework. "Capitalism," he says, "means the liberation and incessant inflaming of appetites" (and even Marx said that, also).

The critique of capitalism as a socially disruptive force is, of course, not new, having been often made, particularly by Southerners here in America over the past two centuries. But Will writes with little appreciation for Southern conservative thought, and is especially critical of the South's traditional respect for states' rights. Thus he writes sweepingly of Strom Thurmond that "No senator fought more raucously or with less effect against the Senate's finest acts, the civil-rights laws." As he does with the capitalists, Will more or less dismisses Southern states' rightists as impostors in their claims to conservatism, claims which he sees as not only spurious but even downright dangerous to the maintenance of a decent civil order.

Not only has Will tilted has medieval lance at market and Southern conservatives, he has departed from conventional conservatism in another respect as well: he has consistently declined to attack the size and growth in power of the federal government. While he has been quite willing to criticize the government for various foolish excesses (as when it worries about women's basketball in Iowa), he refuses to endorse the time-honored suggestion that the very size of the government has gradually led it to become impersonal and dictatorial. In fact, he seems to have a very limited understanding of the American Founding: nowhere does he indicate that he truly understands the extent to which the Framers were committed to creating a nation of states.

The gap between Mr. Will and conservatives of a different stripe is rather clearly defined in one of his editorials entitled "Conservatism's Competing Values." In that essay he looks forward to the time when conservatism will have "matured" to the point of "ending the sterile practice of defining conservatism simply as opposition to 'big government.'" Although he has observed America's "two hundred years of erosion of property rights and states' rights," these trends are apparently of little moment to him; the growing strength of the federal regulatory agencies seems to bother him less than the inability of our elected officials to provide firm and far-sighted leadership. Boldly he has stated that "Real conservatism

Let us give George Will his due: as a proponent of cultural conservatism he has often been brilliant.

requires strong government," and has subsequently proceeded to deplore American permissiveness: "The truly conservative critique of contemporary American society is that there is too much freedom—for abortionists, pornographers, businessmen trading with the Soviet Union, young men exempt from conscription, to cite just four examples." Will does not note that the permissiveness decried in his first two categories would be far less pronounced if the federal government (including its courts) had left the handling of such matters discretionary with the states, such as had been done until recent decades. Concerned as he is with the deterioration of the social fabric, he scarcely considers that the federal government itself, through its steady acquisition and use of power, has been the instrument of many of the changes he so much disapproves. "Stained-glass" conservative that he is, he has little appreciation for the idea of divided power.

The utility and wisdom of dividing power (e.g., between churches and governments in the moral sphere, between conflicting economic interests and the various governments in the economic sphere, and between the national and the state governments in the political sphere) has long been accepted conservative doctrine. The common understanding, of course, is that power divided is power rendered less dangerous. The fragmentation of power is, however, desirable for still another reason: it lies in the meaning of the term jurisdiction. Anyone admiring of the order of medieval polities should readily understand the term. It suggests that within their proper spheres the various authorities should be supreme, but for the sake of good order each authority should stay within its own sphere as much as possible. Resolving the delicate and difficult problems of appropriate jurisdiction may be a task never admitting of permanent and precise achievement, but if we are to hope to have a sound civil order we must at least comprehend the principles. Sadly for us, however, we in the modern world become increasingly fuzzy in our concepts of the proper functions of our churches and businesses and federal and state governments. In the search for private benefits we tend to blur all distinctions and to ignore all jurisdictions that do not accord with our private preferences.

Ironically, the section of the country which has retained the most respect for tradition and custom has been the section least understood (and admired?) by Will: the South. The propensity of many Southerners (past and present) to recognize the dangers of emancipating the acquisitive spirit has already been noted. When Will observes that doctrinaire worship of unbridled capitalism tends to "inflame appetites," he is merely echoing a number of Southerners he has not read very well, including Jefferson, Calhoun, and the Twelve Southerners of *I'll Take My Stand*. To some degree this somewhat atavistic attitude the South has had toward greed is the consequence of the South's commitment to traditional Christian precept; the particularly strong influence of the Christian ethic upon the Southern character has long been recognized, although Will himself does not seem to be much impressed. Will's patronizing attitude toward Southern religion is evident in the surprise he expresses in noting that the National Federation for Decency has been led by "a Mississippi minister, for Pete's sake." One would think that Will should have a keen interest and respect for the folk who inhabit a region known for its lack of interest in being in touch with the times, but as a matter of fact he seems to regard the South as mainly a place of foot-dragging on racial matters, about which Will himself, good son of Lincoln's Illinois that he is, is militantly self-righteous.

Unfortunately, his passion...has blinded him to the virtues and charms of conservatism's other strains.

While the ravages of the modern world can be seen everywhere in America, it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the spirit of Progress has made the least "progress" in the South, especially in its rural areas. In its ethos and spiritual values, as well as in its social mores and customs and institutions, the South has definitely (both past and present) reflected a "stained-glass" mentality to a degree matched by no other part of the country. There are in fact many reasons why the South may be regarded as having retained a somewhat "feudal" character, certainly previous to the War Between the States, and to a lesser degree even to the present. Local political kingdoms, structured societies, agriculture, romance, chivalry, small towns, "feudal" codes of honor, and a general respect for order, authority, and traditional culture in general (including Christianity's moral code), have all characterized the South far more than America's other regions. The distaste many Southerners have had for avarice has also often set them apart, as has their suspicious regard for radical democracy ("King Numbers," John Randolph of Roanoke contemptuously called it). The notion that those in authority should have "the lower orders tugging at their forelocks," has never bothered the Southern conscience as much as it has that of various Northern zealots. Despite all this, Will has rarely been kind to the South or Southerners and in one celebrated instance even lobbied against a Southerner's nomination for chairmanship of the National Endowment for the Humanities in a particularly vicious column. This action was particularly narrow-minded of him since he himself has sometimes displayed a provincial streak. He obviously loves his home state very much and is clearly a product of Lincoln Republican Illinois. This love of the particular is not of itself a bad thing, as Southerners know, but it hardly behooves Will to throw stones at Southerners when he himself identifies so strongly with his own region.

The truth is that George Will's knowledge of American conservatism is quite limited. Some parts he understands well. But in his bones he does not know what it is. He does not understand the profound tension between the prerogatives of the federal government on the one hand, and

those of the church, the market, and the states on the other. Consequently, while he often sees the silliness of the equality movement in its particulars —as when the Department of Transportation was concerned that women in carpools do not drive as much as men—he does not see that liberal egalitarianism is the common mortal enemy of cultural, capitalistic, and states' right conservatism. The federal government has become (at least until recently) the engine of democratic excess, and unfortunately the excesses of democracies generally tend to be in an egalitarian direction. In resisting tendencies the various conservatisms must make common cause: to fight their battles jointly and separately against the leveling spirit of modernity.

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Poor But Proud

by Michael Jordan

J. Wayne Flynt, *Dixie's Forgotten People: The South's Poor Whites.* Bloomington and London; Indiana University Press, 1979.

Professor Flynt, the author of this volume, concentrates on the economic condition and the cultural life of poor white Southerners, but does not fail to mention some of the vices of the American majority, especially the attempt, often unsuccessful, to impose their own values and lifestyle on the South. According to Flynt, one of the most difficult obstacles confronting those who attempt to assess Southern poor whites is the abundance of stereotypical definitions and judgments. For example, contrary to the popular view, all poor whites in the South were not (and are not) racists and rednecks, nor were (or are) most of them Klansmen and Holy Rollers. As Flynt observes in the Preface, "Getting to know people as individuals dissolves many of one's pre-conceived notions about them, and so it is with Southern poor whites."

However, even when stereotypes are abandoned, all the difficulties in assessing the culture of poor whites in the South are not removed. One must find a scale with which to judge this culture. Flynt believes that many errors in public policy and in private interpretation have been made by judging the South with the values of the mainstream culture. Should Southern culture, with its rural, agrarian, and religious values and its notion of kin, be weighed in a balance which favors urban, industrial, and secular values and the nuclear family? This question was dealt with in the Southern Agrarian manifesto, *I'll Take My Stand.* Flynt appreciates the importance of the Agrarians' social criticism but finds fault with them for glamorizing the Old South and for failing to come up with a detailed, practical program to alleviate poverty. The Agrarians did advocate a plan: subsistence farming, agricultural diversification, and individual ownership of farms (rather than tenant or corporate farms). But they offered no *detailed* program for reducing poverty.

Many social scientists have emphasized racism in the South, thinking it the most salient characteristic of Southerners, especially poor whites.

Faulting the Agrarians for failure to spell out a program of specific economic reform misses the point. This was not their mission. More than material poverty, the Agrarians feared poverty of the spirit and spiritual enslavement. They should be regarded as critics or prophets, not as planners.

Flynt chides Arnold Toynbee, New Deal bureaucrats, and "secular missionaries" (industrialists and their spokesmen) for equating material poverty with moral and cultural depravity. Appalachian mountain people often were poverty stricken, but this material poverty was not always accompanied by barbarism, illiteracy, and witchcraft, as Toynbee stated in *A Study of History.* Bureaucrats and secular missionaries, devoted to economic yard sticks, could see little or no value in Southern or mountain culture. Also, they, like many other Americans, could not understand a people who "made do with what the Good Lord provided" and who accepted hard times as "God's will."

Many social scientists have emphasized racism in the South, thinking it the most salient characteristic of Southerners, especially poor whites. Flynt argues that racism "was only one aspect of a multifaceted folk culture" and does not deserve the primary attention it has received from authors seeking "to serve their own ideological purposes." In particular, Flynt censures aristocrat William Byrd, the abolitionists Frederick L. Olmstead and Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Southern novelist William Gilmore Simms for serving ideology rather than truth in some of their writings about either poor whites or the racial attitudes of poor whites.

Flynt views Southern poor whites as an *ethnic* minority, "a group of racially and historically related people who shared a common culture which they preserved in a distinctive way of life, language, habit, and loyalty." As an ethnic group, Southern poor whites differed substantially from the rest of America. The Southern "ethnics" were tenant farmers, producing relatively non-perishable, one-crop substances (cotton, tobacco, sugar cane), with an emotional, otherworldly religion, gifted in the arts of story-telling (tall tales and ghost stories) and music, both sacred and secular. Those qualities gave Southern poor whites their distinction. Flynt observes that poor people have always been the best keepers of American folklore and that this has been especially true in the South where "strong family ties, poverty, isolation, and hostility to outsiders kept oral traditions unchanged over the years."

For a long time the South remained economically and politically isolated from the Northeast. Poor whites in the South, says Flynt, experienced a double isolation, for they had little influence on the economic and political activity of their own region. This isolation from the mainstream culture and from the hub of activity at home contributed to the individualism and conservatism of poor whites. Attempts by industrialists, unions, and New Deal agencies to reduce this isolation were not always successful. Farmers who left the land to work in mines, factories, and mills merely exchanged poverty on the land for poverty in town. Those who moved north suffered from double culture shock and were doubly isolated. By 1900, says Flynt, many Southern workers had discovered "that industry was a Frankenstein." Programs which ignored regional culture alleviated neither poverty nor isolation and "lifted the poor more often into purgatory than into the heavenly city."

The Southern "ethnics" were tenant farmers,... with an emotional, other-worldly religion, gifted in the arts of story-telling and music.

Poverty in the South, ineffectually dealth with in Reconstruction days and only partly alleviated by Roosevelt's New Deal measures, was forgotten for a few decades only to be rediscovered in the early 1960's. Despite New Frontier programs instituted under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, Kennedy's Appalachian Regional Commission and Johnson's War on Poverty, the poor are still with us.

But what can be done? According to Flynt, "Government can help, but the Southern landscape is littered with the wreckage of ill-conceived government panaceas." Because of human nature and the nature of society, it is unreasonable to expect the eradication of poverty everywhere, but some means are more successful and less demeaning than others. Flynt seems to echo Agrarian sentiments in his assessment of the problem:

> *Progress might mean jobs and a better way of life to some, but to others it meant the extinction of old ways that were revered and still meaningful. Progress might mean the eradication of poor white racism and fundamentalism, but it would also spell doom to magnificent handicrafts and bonds of spirit and neighborliness by which people lived creatively with one another.*

Flynt also delineates the bitter aspects of Southern life (racism, violence, and political demagoguery) as well as the sweet. His effort is to examine *Dixie's Forgotten People* from their own perspective, not from that of another region. Flynt may owe some of his understanding to his own ancestors he describes as "proud sharecroppers of the northeast Alabama clay hills."

The volume includes an excellent annotated bibliography that students of Southern culture will find valuable.

Mr. Jordan has recently been assistant to The Sage of Mecosta.

John Ford's Irvin Cobb Country

by Norman Stewart

Judge Priest (1934) and *The Sun Shines Bright* (1953). Directed by John Ford.

Thanks to an oversight by Twentieth Century-Fox, you can now see John Ford's evocative picture of Southern small town life *Judge Priest* (1934). They just forgot about it since it was virtually unshown and completely unpromoted, so it fell into public domain when the copyright ran out.

Judge Priest is mainly an impressionistic mood piece based on several Irvin Cobb short stories set in a time, 1890, when the War for the Confederacy was still a living memory. To the extent there is a plot, it concerns Judge Billy Priest's exonerating an orphan's past so she will become socially acceptable and she and his nephew can marry. He gets his chance when a man is tried on a phony assault charge while defending her honor in a pool room. He is her father, a convicted murderer before the war who was released to fight and become a hero. In a burst of Southern fervor, he is found not guilty and honored by a spontaneous parade.

His Maine upbringing would appear to make Ford an unlikely director for the definitive Southern talkie, but that is what *Judge Priest* is, *Gone With the Wind* notwithstanding. But in light of his entire career, this makes sense.

Ford wasn't interested in the sort of materialistic values symbolized by military victory, but in a person's reaction to defeat and his retention of honor when society didn't seem to allow it. He most obviously showed this in the Confederate charge at Newton Station and its aftermath in *The Horse Soldiers* (1959).

This attitude is basically Christian since to him the acceptance of defeat and dishonor, as defined by the rest of the world, could purify the sufferer. He also was attracted, especially as he grew older, to heroes who gave all of themselves to society, but who can't get back what they needed. Even if his wife hadn't been from North Carolina, he would have been attracted to the South since that region had given all it had to go through almost a crucifixion and resurrection. In no other film of his has the entire society gone through such an experience.

Inside this community, Ford specifically deals with social outcasts who have gone through the same thing individually as the society as a whole has, but not as part of that society and who haven't been absorbed into the society.

***Stay through the end credits and hear a rousing reprise of "Dixie" while the screen is* blank!**

Stepin Fetchit, as the chief black character Jeff Poindexter, does his basic vaudeville turn, but sometime in the past he was almost lynched for some unnamed crime. He now works for Priest and Priest openly makes him a part of his work. He now fits into the social mainstream.

The girl, Ellie May, and her father, Bob Gillis, are spectacularly embraced when his heroics and their relationship are exposed by the minister, played by Henry B. Walthall, the Little Colonel of D.W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation* which Ford was an extra in.

Walthall's big scene is probably the most obvious homage by one director to another in any thirties Hollywood film. As he testifies, there is a flashback openly patterned on Griffith. Gillis even saves a Union soldier and rams a Confederate flag down a Yankee canon as Walthall did in *The Birth*. Throughout, Walthall's face is irised in the screen's corner. This was a device perfected by and most identified with Griffith, but by 1934 it had been long obsolete. It all adds up to the greatest intentional use of iconology in Ford's entire career.

If some elements in later pictures might make you think Ford wasn't on the South's side, just watch Gillis' acquittal and the ensuing parade. But don't leave yet. Stay through the end credits and hear a rousing reprise of "Dixie" while the screen is *blank!* Southern theatre organists in the twenties regularly played "Dixie" at the start of shows, but this is one of the few times, maybe the only one, when it was tacked onto the end of a commercial film for exit music. This is often excised, but to see *Judge Priest* without this is to miss Ford's point: from military defeat, the South could claim moral victory, or, to be trite about it, the South had risen again. It was another treatment of his belief that defeat and dishonor were ennobling.

After the trial and the parade, the big set piece is a church bazaar. Ford regularly used rituals and ceremonies to reveal character and he does that here by showing all the town's elements playing off each other. The only ones who don't fit are Priest's sister-in-law and the carpetbagger lawyer running against him for reelection. Their problem is that they haven't been tempered by defeat and humiliation as the others have. Even Ellie May, though not as socially accepted as they, fits in better since the whispers about her provide Ford's required ordeal by fire.

Ford's heroes' recurring personal tragedy is the death of wives, usually before the story starts. Both Priest's wife and son are long gone and his commitment to saving society from the carpetbaggers fills that void. Predictably, he goes to his wife's grave to talk to her, as most such Ford heroes do. He then spies Gillis speaking at the grave of his secret wife, Ellie's mother who died after coming to town and giving birth. As the film progresses, Priest sees his nephew and Ellie as a reflection of him and his

wife. This involves him with Gillis' defense so they can be eventually married. On the way to the altar, the whole town is united.

It's tempting to approach *Judge Priest* as a Will Rogers vehicle and at the time, it was easily lost in the twenty talkies he did for Fox. Rogers was a good screen personality who seemed to inhabit a role rather than play it, but he was not an overwhelming comic figure as W.C. Fields was, to cite another vaudevillian. His improvisation needed a good structure to work in and, with Ford, he found someone who could provide it. *Judge Priest*, along with *Dr. Bull* (1933) and *Steamboat 'Round the Bend* (1935), are his best movies. It's too bad there weren't more.

Judge Priest is one of the great films of the thirties. In fact, depending on the interview, it was Ford's favorite. He liked it so much that he reworked the material in 1953 in *The Sun Shines Bright* and, in other interviews, he said that was his favorite.

This time, Judge Priest is played by Charles Winninger, but Stepin Fetchit is back as Jeff Poindexter. It is 1905 and the plot elements have been moved around. Priest defends a young black against a rape charge and saves him when the real culprit organizes a lynch mob. Ellie May is now Lucy Lee whose disgraced mother is a prostitute who comes home to see her and her father, a former Confederate general, before she dies. Priest organizes her funeral which unites all the town as the trial in the previous film did.

Although it was shot for Republic, it has a plusher look than the first film. It mostly takes place at night, making the title *The Sun Shines Bright* perhaps too obviously ironic. But the real danger and irony is the twentieth century and the destruction of the small town's way of life as represented by Milburn Stone as Priest's opponent for judge. Fortunately, Priest wins, but it is obviously a temporary win. In the earlier film nothing much was at stake since Bertram Churchill's Maydew wasn't a threatening figure, but Stone is. The difference between the two elections reflects Ford's disenchantment with the modern world.

The unfortunately confusing point in both films, and the one which caused the virtual suppression of *Judge Priest*, is the race issue, particularly the casting of Stepin Fetchit. Most characters, or readily believeable ones at least, can be classified as some sort of stereotype. Ford's use of black stereotypes in these two films comes easily, as he did with Irish ones in *The Quiet Man* and *The Last Hurrah*, because he is confident of himself as a social observer. Since a character's origins are basic to his make-up, he couldn't ignore them.

As an example of a now depised stereotype, which is easier to repudiate than to try to understand, Stepin Fetchit is a brilliant performer. He took a standard minstrel character and forever identified himself with it, going from stereotype to archtype. By the late forties, though, the ideologues had banished him from the screen, but to Ford he was just another old friend from the studio who needed a job and who provided a ready reference to the first film.

Judge Priest *is one of the great films of the thirties. In fact, depending on the interview, it was Ford's favorite.*

The Sun Shines Bright ends with another procession, not as rambunctious as *Judge Priest*'s, but one in which the town marches by in tribute. A horse pranching in the distance to "Dixie" is the first sight. The people come by in ascending social order, or rather the order Ford values them in. But this time Billy Priest is not out with them; he is distanced from society since it can't give him what he has given it and everyone knows it. After they have left and he turns to enter his dark house, the blacks in the distance sing "My Old Kentucky Home." With the twentieth century now on, it becomes an anthem for small town America; it's the end of an era and he knows it. The imagery is remarkably like the end of his western masterpiece *The Searchers*.

Rarely has a major director remade a picture. One of the few other times was when Hitchcock remade *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, but there he mainly reworked some script problems. He made a better film, but it was still a polishing of good material. It didn't add any new weight to his body of work.

Viewed with or without *Judge Priest*, *The Sun Shines Bright* is a major work and adds a dimension to Ford's work which it otherwise wouldn't have. It shows his change in attitude and, more than any other film, except perhaps *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, it shows the price real leaders must pay.

Judge Priest and *The Sun Shines Bright* are just as significant as his cavalry trilogy and certainly more personal. It's movies like these which will guarantee John Ford's memory long after Jerry has been forgotten. ■

Between a Rock and a Hard Place
(continued from page 43)

upsurge in conservative militancy, an activism born of despair. If increasing numbers of people become convinced that elections do not, cannot change things in the U.S., the discontented middle and working classes may well turn to more direct action, taking their cue from the tactics of other discontented groups: organize, demonstrate, and exert the sort of moral pressure no politician can resist—money and votes. If we can draw any conclusion from the evidence of country music, some Southerners, and, in fact, the plain folks of the whole country, are waking up to the fact that no one, but no one is going to lift a finger to help them, if they will not help themselves—not their own Jimmie Carter and not the well-meaning Ronald Reagan. If some sort of social revolution does take place in this country, it will not be made by discontented Chicanos, alienated radicals, or country club Republicans. It will come from the dispossessed ordinary Americans of the South, West, and Midwest. The plain Southern folks have more than once in the past demonstrated their ability to make trouble—in two revolutionary wars, for example—and they could be dangerous once more, if they ever decide just what it is the South is going to do again. ■

BETWEEN A ROCK & A HARD PLACE

Thomas Fleming

The South's Gonna Do It Again

A few days ago I ran into an old friend, an historian, who started in on the *Partisan*. "I've lived all my life in the South," he grumbled, "but I don't see what makes Southern life so wonderful that you and your friends want to impose it on the rest of the country." I did my best to reassure him that nothing was further from our intention than any form of standardization—whether making the South like New England or vice-versa. He seemed somewhat mollified. Still, his remark set me to thinking about the great gulf between educated Southerners (like my friend the historian) and those plain folks we have learned to despise as rednecks, grits, and crackers.

We are in a period of time, when most affluent and educated Southern people have come to identify their interests with members of their own class in the Northeast and California, instead of with their region. They are, by and large, proud of urbanization (still more of suburbanization), commercial culture, and the values of liberation which characterize life in Atlanta and its Northern originals. Among such people, it is a race to see who can give up the most first (a reversal of "First with the Most" Forrest's strategy): collards are replaced by spinach and mushroom salad, Country Music by Rod Stewart and Paul Simon (if you're under 40), Wayne Newton (if you're older), and regional dialects by a way of speaking that resembles a cross between Dan Rather and a California car salesman. A very decent businessman confessed to me recently that he hated to hear his own voice on a tape (sounded like a cracker) and always preferred to hire an actor with a "neutral accent" for any promotions.

But meanwhile, down on the farm and up at the mill, the plain folks are turning on their radios and listening to songs that amount to a Declaration of Independence from Yankee urbanity. Mixed in with the usual odes to adultery and divorce—pick-up trucks and picking up girls—are songs with a clear-cut social message: everything good, true, decent, and enjoyable is Southern or rural; and everything bad, false, rotten, and boring is found in Northern cities. It is not just Southerners who are getting this message, but all of rural and small town America.

Some of the songs are the usual tin pan alley stuff—in the same class with "Mammy" and "Rock-a-bye your baby with a Dixie Melody"—"Whispering" Bill Anderson's "Southern Fried" is a good example; others express a genuine and sentimental affection for the South—like Charlie Daniels' "Carolina," but many of them can be taken as a thoughtful and downright hostile commentary on the sectional cleavage. Charlie Daniels' "Ragin' Cajun," for example, breaks out of jail to rescue his sister (in some far-off Northern town) from "the soul-destroying punk" that put a needle in her arm. Merle Haggard, who kicked off the genre back in the late 60s with "Okie from Muskogee" and "Fighting Side of Me" has not given up speaking for the rural South and West—despite being born in Bakersfield, California.

The most provocative country singer appears to be Hank Williams, Jr., whose "Country Folks Can Survive" is less Southern but more explicit than the rest. The song is an apocalyptic vision of a worn-out and sterile urban culture, in stark contrast with people who can still hunt, trap, and make their own wine. When the singer's friend gets stabbed in New York for $27, he comments: "I'd like to spit some Beechnut in that dude's eye/and shoot 'em with my 45." Try to imagine what went through the audience's mind when Mr. Williams insisted on singing it on the David Letterman Show.

The song that best sums up the resurgent Southern feelings of a good many ordinary people is Charlie Daniels' "The South's Gonna Do It Again." The song is, in fact, just a celebration of Southern Country-Rock groups like Lynnyrd Skinnyrd and the CDB, but the refrain is suggestive: "You can be loud and be proud/Cause the South's Gonna Do it Again." Do what? It is better that he does not say. But there are more than a few beer-swilling (or dope-smoking) rednecks, riding around in their pick-ups and listening to Charlie and Hank and Merle. Their discontent with the way things are is often expressed as complaints over high taxes, crooked politicians, and our gutless foreign policy, but their feelings run much deeper. These people once had a culture, a way of life (including an aristocracy) all their own. Now they are made to feel like exiles in the land their ancestors carved out of the wilderness.

These people are beginning to believe that the election of Ronald Reagan was not, in any sense, a revolution. Not only does the social and moral disintegration continue with no perceptible abatement, but even the much-heralded tax cut is being rolled back—with a special burden imposed on the Southern tobacco industry and on anyone rash enough to save his money. Even if prosperity were just around the corner, certain people have been heard to wonder—out loud—what difference it would make. America is already richer than Babylon and almost as moral as Sodom. It is not money our people crave, but life "and that abundantly."

Of course, even rednecks give the Republicans their due: they are a lot smarter about money than the Democrats. Some Republicans are under the delusion that the desire for money is the root of all goodness (read George Gilder and Michael Novak, if you won't take my word for it). The real difference between the two parties is simply this: While Republicans know how to make money, the Democrats only know how to spend it.

Certain cynics on the right—people like Kevin Phillips and our own Samuel Francis—have been predicting an

(continued on preceding page)

WHISTLING DIXIE

J.R. Vanover

Precious Memories

George Garrett, in his splendidly cranky and very wise essay in *Why the South Will Survive*, observes that a nearly universal characteristic of Southern writers is their sense of loss, of "the dimming of many bright things and the falling away of familiar certainties." He notes that this is one of Southerners' most attractive traits, but that "it is mildly strange that what the very youngest generation of Southern writers laments and regrets the passing of has to be, in fact, among the crowd of *new things* whose arrival and presence on the scene was roundly deplored by the previous generation."

I know what he means. Older readers may not believe me, but is is possible—I swear it—to be nostalgic about white bread and lunch meat sandwiches. For me, a Dolly Madison cupcake can set off a Proustian reverie of driving through a steamy Southern night, with WLAC blasting Hank Ballard songs, between commercials for White Rose Petroleum Jelly. One can actually believe, deep down, that the decline of Western civilization dates from the death of Buddy Holly. I know. I do.

At the same time, we can be appalled by those younger folks, like the executive editor of this magazine, who feel the same way about Simon and Garfunkel. And I am absolutely distraught when I think about what my own children may remember fondly. Izod shirts? Disco? The new Episcopal prayer book? (Actually, I may have innoculated my kids. "What's in life jackets, Daddy?" my daughter asked the other day. "It used to be something called kapok," I told her, "but I don't know what they use now." "But it's not as good, is it?" she said.)

Of course, Garrett's point is that we need to remember that our own parents looked on Buddy Holly much as the Romans must have regarded Alaric. Indeed, that was part of Buddy's appeal. Our folks, in their turn, were given to lamenting that "nothing has been the same since the War" —meaning World War II, by which time the Golden Age was long past, according to *their* parents. This elegiac stance was certainly evident in the aftermath of Appomatox. Oscar Wilde, during his American tour, remarked that you couldn't admire the moon in Georgia without being told how much better it looked before *that* war, but I gather that antebellum Southerners harked back to Ole Virginny, of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, if not to Merrie England.

Maybe Garrett is right when he traces this trope to the Anglo-Saxon ballad. Lord knows it is alive and well in the latter-day Anglo-Saxon ballads of country music, where vanished "scenes of our childhood and home" make up much of the subject-matter. Coupled with that pervasive nostalgia is a celebration of continuity, sometimes disconcerting, as when Hank Williams, Jr., rejoices that Florida girls still don't wear underwear, folks still get drunk at football games, and his woman "still looks good in her T-shirt, standin' in the Georgia rain," and concludes that "the New South, thank God, is still the same." It may be significant that one of the few songs I know that is somewhat skeptical about the singer's own rose-colored memories, "I Wonder Could I Live There Any More," is sung by one of the very few black country-music singers around, Charlie Pride. Pride doesn't deny the *feeling*, but notes that actuality was grimmer than he realized at the time.

There are really two sides to Garrett's anthropological observation: on the one hand, Southerners' regret at the passing of familiar things; on the other, our readiness to adopt new things, to naturalize them and turn them into familiar things—Southern things, whose passing we shall regret. It is rather startling to consider how many of what seem bedrock Southern institutions are actually recent innovations. In *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, C. Vann Woodward has claimed that was the case even for racial segregation. Perhaps he exaggerated, for rhetorical effect, but there are other examples. I dare say that few of us now could imagine the South without stockcar racing, for instance, although we know, deep down, that it didn't exist before stockcars did. A happy historical amnesia can help this tendency along: I don't doubt that there are younger Southerners who think the Atlanta Braves were founded about the same time as the Ku Klux Klan.

Joe Gray Taylor has some nice examples in his recent informal history of Southern foodways, *Eating, Drinking, and Visiting in the South*. That staple of the Southern summer, iced tea, heavily sweetened (what Grady Nutt, who as a Baptist preacher has to drink a lot of it, calls "forty-weight iced tea")—that tooth-rotting potation wasn't widely consumed until there were reliable supplies of ice in the Southern countryside. And however great Grandma's biscuits were you can bet *her* grandmother didn't bake many of them: she didn't have the wheat flour and baking powder to do it with.

No, particulars come and go—and I'll lament the passing of most of them as loudly as any man or woman here. But perhaps there is some comfort in the persistence of the lamentation itself, and in the great ability the South has shown to roll with the economic, social, military, and technological punches—taking over new things and domesticating them, getting cozy with them, missing them when they, in turn, are gone.

I'll close with a story that seems somehow to the point, although I can't really say how. It's not a story, really, just a fragment of speech overheard in a local grocery store. One of the checkers, responding to an inquiry from a kind of high-toned lady who reads *Southern Living* and *always breathes through her nose, turned toward the manager's booth and hollered: "Hey Bobby—where's the couscous at?"* ⊠

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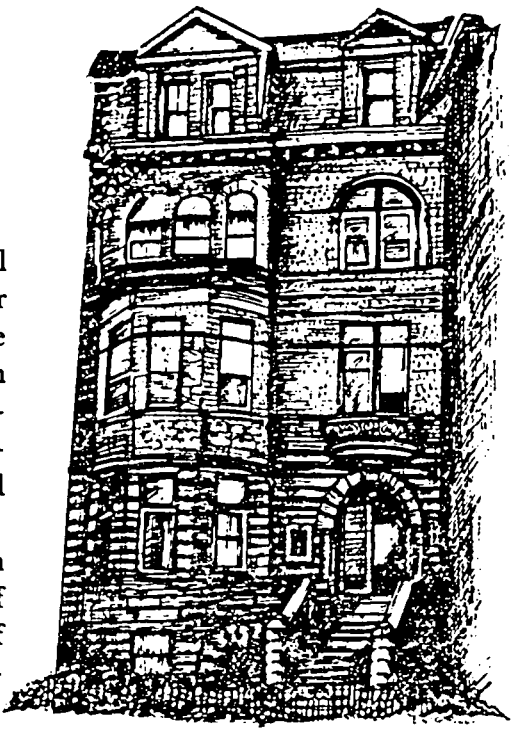

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